

AFRICA / OTHER

Agri industry calls for post-insurrection accountability

19 Aug 2021 - by Eugene Goddard



Justin Chadwick, CEO of the Citrus Growers' Association (CGA).

The need for accountability after last month's insurrectionist violence and subsequent looting and destruction of supply chain concerns in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng has been reiterated by two of South Africa's prominent thought leaders from the agricultural community.

Reflecting on social media about the mayhem that ensued after former president Jacob Zuma was imprisoned, Wandile Sihlobo of the Agricultural Business Chamber (Agbiz) said "agribusinesses have an important role in rebuilding South Africa after (the) recent unrest".

Responding to the Agbiz economist, Justin Chadwick of the Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) said: "While I am sure we are all keen to rebuild and put that horrific episode behind us, what is the use if the instigators and perpetrators are roaming free and may do the same again."

The CGA CEO has reason to be concerned.

The unrest came at the height of the citrus export season – and it's an industry in which South Africa has become a world leader. It now remains to be seen how long that position can be maintained when exports face such duress.

Not only was a substantial consignment of fruit bound for the Port of Durban lost, but the recent cyberattack, which brought Transnet's ports and railways network to a standstill, further damaged the country's reputation as an exporter on which world markets can rely.

Referring to the perceived lack of impunity for those responsible for fomenting July's unrest - many of whom are part of the ANC's radical economic transformation faction – Chadwick said “before we rebuild we need some accountability”.

Sihlobo said he agreed - to which a private commentator responded: “The big question is who are the real instigators? Was it a ‘spokesperson’ who circulated the voice note, or someone sitting in Parliament or any other high office who covered his tracks well?”

Clearly President Cyril Ramaphosa's recent cabinet shuffle, coming days after the unrest and in which he sacked at least one minister responsible for bungling her national safety portfolio during the violence, hasn't done much to restore confidence in certain circles.

To add to the unease in the aftermath of July's anarchic tumult, is information that has come to light that firebrands within the ruling party are planning countrywide protests in opposition to Ramaphosa.

Demands that he resign, freight industry interests fear, could yet again spark the kind of violence that South Africa has now learned comes at a high cost to supply chain concerns – not to mention the threat it poses to people (see post elsewhere in today's news feed).

Sign up to our mailing list and get daily news headlines and weekly features directly to your inbox free.

Subscribe to receive print copies of Freight News Features to your door.

0 Comments

 Login ▼

G

Start the discussion...

LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS 

Name



Share

Best Newest Oldest

Be the first to comment.

Subscribe

Privacy

Do Not Sell My Data

