

***"Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness."* – Desmond Tutu**

DAVOS AND THE UNUSUAL

"Business unusual" is a term often used when a system has been upended and adaptive thinking is required. I think it is an apt phrase to use in January 2026, observing events at this year's World Economic Forum event where global 'big players' have the past week descended on Davos, Switzerland. Attendance this year is unusually high according to reports. "A spirit of dialogue" is the key theme, with five focus areas: cooperation, growth, investment in people, innovation and building prosperity.

It is "business unusual" as the event follows a year of "liberation day" tariffs – to the detriment of the multilateral trade system premised on the World Trade Organisation. Tariffs have now been positioned as a central mechanism of trade. But other events early in the new year have also signalled and heightened the sense that conflict might be a feature of how 2026 pans out.

One of the key documents churned out as part of the Davos engagements is the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2026. This report is based on a survey canvassing opinions of experts spanning academia, civil society, government, business and international organisations on current global risks. A cursory read of the document gives a sense that it is not for the faint hearted, and that all is not well with the world today – global risk is, by the way, defined in the document as the possibility of an event or condition occurring that would have significant negative impact on global GDP, population, or natural resources. Top of the hit parade is geoeconomic confrontation, followed by state-based armed conflict, with extreme weather events coming in, in third position. Regarding extreme weather, South Africa's far northeastern parts are flooded, and southern parts of the country are facing dry conditions. Extreme weather can hold enormous consequence for the agricultural sector and our industry. It has been several years now that the country has had one or more weather-related events of note to contend with annually. Please spare a thought for all those affected by these jarring events early in the year. It is heartening to know that agricultural organisations in the regions are involved in support.

Whether there are geopolitical storm clouds on the horizon, or more immediate weather shifts felt on the ground, one hopes that a sense of humanity guides all our actions: understanding, cooperation, and a drive towards resilience and shared prosperity.

REQUEST FOR ROAD CONDITION INFORMATION TO SUPPORT FLOOD DAMAGE MAPPING

As floodwaters in Limpopo and Mpumalanga (primarily) subside, government task teams will commence road and bridge condition assessments. The CGA is engaging with stakeholders to develop a web-based GIS mapping model to document, monitor, and track the condition of the road network, as well as rehabilitation and repair activities. While work progresses toward the full GIS model, an interim online GIS platform using Google Maps Live has been created. Kindly assist in contributing information to this model by sending the following details via message or email (mitchell@cga.co.za): Location details (GPS coordinates or road name with nearby reference points), photographs (where possible), and a brief description of the road condition. All collected data will be shared with relevant government disaster management committees, and we will actively track the rehabilitation of critical road networks ahead of the upcoming citrus season.

CGA ROADSHOWS

Week 16-19 February sees Boitshoko's team heading to Burgersfort, Hoedspruit, Letsitele, and the Limpopo River regions, while Paul's team will head out to Groblersdal, Nelspruit, and the Onderberg regions.

During the week of 3-5 March Boitshoko and his team will visit the Boland and Western Cape, and Northern Cape regions, while Paul and his team will visit the Patensie, Sundays River Valley, and Eastern Cape Midlands regions. It will be KZN's turn on the 11th of March.

Further details on venues, times, and the programme will be communicated in due course. Please RSVP to tanya@cga.co.za.