

Kwanalu: Police should not abuse riots as an excuse

By Lloyd Phillips | 07 September 2021 | Read 77 times



By way of illustration. Photo: Marieke Snyman.

The mid-July riots in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng were not an excuse for the police to increasingly hand over their responsibilities to the private sector of South Africa.

Although the July riots in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng showed that private security companies and law-abiding citizens play an important role in assisting the state's security structures, this is not an excuse for the police to increasingly increase their responsibilities in the private sector. to move down.

In a recent webinar by *Landbouweekblad* about lessons that the agricultural value chain of KwaZulu-Natal learned during the riots, Ms. Sandy La Marque, chief executive of the provincial agricultural union (Kwanalu), said it was important for the private sector to remain accountable to the police. Weaknesses and shortcomings with regard to the effective execution of the police's mandate to protect South African citizens from lawlessness cannot be allowed.

"While Kwanalu and the rest of the law-abiding civil society have realized we need to join hands and do much more because of the failures during and since the riots, it does not take away the duty of the state security and security structures."

La Marque added that it was extremely important for the private sector, especially agriculture, to participate in the structures of the national rural security strategy to hold the police accountable. If the private sector meets at the local level to discuss its security issues, local police representatives should also be present. This involvement of the private sector in and monitoring of the police and its actions regarding the application of government security strategies should range from grassroots to ministerial.

"We need to start demanding the services and resources we all need to protect our communities," La Marque said.

Me. Ruth Bezuidenhout, general manager of Safire Crop Protection Co-operative Limited, said private security companies and civilians should only be a backup for the police, instead of having to take over responsibilities almost completely. "Taxpayers' money is used to create the resources that are supposed to provide protection to civil society, but it is not effective. The police should be the institution that is adequately trained and has the necessary resources.

"It should not become the responsibility of citizens to be the primary protectors of themselves and their communities."