Agri SA

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AGRI SA SE KOMMENTAAR OP DIE STAATSREDE
AGRI SA COMMENTARY ON THE SONA

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"Te midde van moeilike omstandighede het president Zuma hom goed gekwyt van sy taak met die lewering van sy staatsrede gisteraand," sê Agri SA president, Johannes Möller. Verrigtinge vóór die staatsrede mag wel vermaaklikheidswaarde gehad het, maar was beslis nie die toonbeeld van 'n land waar mense daarna streef om die lewensomstandighede van alle burgers op 'n ordelike en gedissiplineerde wyse te verbeter nie."

Möller het gesê Agri SA het voor die staatsrede gevra vir staatsmanskap om die vele ekonomiese en maatskaplike probleme in die land aan te spreek en dat die organisasie sy voorbehoude uitgespreek het oor die beoogde inhoud van "radikale transformasie". "President Zuma het wel op 'n visioenêre wyse gepraat oor 'n aantal verwante aangeleenthede. Die beginsels met betrekking tot transformasie wat hy uitgestip het kan, na my mening, in die praktyk toegepas word, veral op 'n samewerking-grondslag tussen die regering en die privaatsektor.

"President Zuma het melding gemaak van prysenswaardige grondhervormingsinisiatiewe wat deur boere in samewerking met plaaswerkers aangepak is. Hy het klem gelê op die belangrikheid van die Nasionale Ontwikkelingsplan en die Grondwet, wat ook die raamwerke is wat Agri SA gebruik het om werkbare grondhervormingsvoorstelle aan die regering voor te lê. Kommerwekkend is egter die onsekerhede ten opsigte van die Onteieningswet wat terugverwys is na die parlement; die voorgestelde wysigings aan die Mededingingswet om voorsiening te maak vir konsentrasie van eienaarskap, en selfs die beoogde Wetsontwerp op Eiendomspraktisyns. Agri SA, soos baie ander belanghebbendes, het weereens voor die staatsrede die behoefte aan beleidsekerheid beklemtoon. Dit is wel 'n moeilike taak maar uiters belangrik ten einde Suid-Afrika weereens te vestig as 'n voorkeur-bestemming vir regstreekse buitelandse belegging".

Möller sê Agri SA sal, soos in die verlede, voldoen aan die president se versoek dat daar met SAPS saamgewerk word om veiliger gemeenskappe te verseker. "Ons hoef nie verder te beklemtoon hoe belangrik die veiligheid van die boerderygemeenskap vir ons as organisasie is nie."

"President Zuma het melding gemaak van die R2,5-miljard wat toegewys is vir droogtehulp. "Agri SA bevraagteken hierdie bedrag; om die waarheid sê, ons is van mening dat daar baie min hulp vir hierdie doel ontvang is. Ons sal egter met die Departement van Landbou, Bosbou en Visserye skakel om uit te vind hoe dié bedrag bereken is."

"'n Aantal jaar gelede, was die "butterfly" benadering tot handel deur die regering voorgestel, d.w.s handel binne Afrika en met alle dele van die wêreld. Die president het weer omvattend verwys na handelsooreenkomste met, by voorbeeld, die Europese Unie, Mercosur-lande, China en sommige van die Brics-lede. Vir die landbousektor is handel- en verwante aangeleenthede natuurlik van groot belang en ek wil die regering loof vir die suksesse wat behaal is in hierdie verband."

"Soos president Zuma, wil ek ook hê dat apartheid bloot 'n vae herinnering word en dat Suid-Afrika weer 'n land met aansien sal raak."

Uitgereik deur Agri SA, Direktoraat: Korporatiewe Skakeling

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AGRI SA COMMENTARY ON THE SONA

"Amidst trying circumstances president Zuma carried himself well when delivering the SONA last night, says Johannes Moller, president of Agri SA. Proceedings prior to him delivering his address might have had entertainment value but most certainly does not portray a country where people seek to enhance the well-being of all citizens in an orderly and disciplined fashion".

Moller said that Agri SA, before the SONA, called for statesmanship in dealing with the many economic and social ills of the country and that the organization expressed reservations with the intended content of "radical transformation". "President Zuma did deal with a number of related matters in visionary manner and the principles in relation to transformation expressed by him can in my view on especially a cooperative basis between government and private sector be put into practice.

"President Zuma made mention of laudable land reform initiatives conducted by farmers in cooperation with farm workers. He emphasized the importance of the National Development Plan and the Constitution, the very frameworks which Agri SA also used to present workable land reform proposals to government. Of concern, though is the uncertainties in relation to the Expropriation Bill having been referred back to parliament, the intended changes to the Competition Act to deal with concentration of ownership and even the envisaged Property Practitioners Bill. Agri SA like many other stakeholders have again prior to the SONA stressed the need for policy certainty, admittedly a tough ask but of paramount importance to restore South Africa as a preferred destination for foreign direct investment".

Moller said that Agri SA will as in the past adhere to the request from the president to work with the SAPS to ensure safer communities. "Needless to emphasize the importance of rural safety to the farming community for us as an organization".

"President Zuma made mention of R2,5 billion having been allocated towards drought aid. "Agri SA questions this amount, in fact in our view very little support was received in this regard. We will however engage with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries on how this was calculated."

"Some years ago, the "butterfly" approach with respect to trade was mooted by government, meaning trade into Africa and with all parts of the world. The president again referred extensively to trade agreements with e.g. the European Union, Mercosur countries, Africa, China and some of the Brics members. For the agricultural sector, trade and related matters are of obvious importance and I wish to commend government for successes in this regard."

"Like president Zuma, I also wish apartheid to become a faint memory and for South Africa to become great again"

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