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Mediaverklaring / Media Release

Weldoener betaal met sy lewe
BENEFACTOR PAYS WITH HIS LIFE

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'n Bekende boer, weldoener en gemeenskapsleier, Dirk Steenkamp is vroeg Sondagoggend op sy plaas in die Vredefort-omgewing vermoor. "Moorde en ander geweldsmisdade waaronder die landbougemeenskap voortdurend gebuk gaan spreek van 'n gemeenskap waarin daar ernstige tekortkominge met die uitleef van waardes en die respek vir lewe is", sê Dan Kriek, president van Agri SA.

Steenkamp was in die gemeenskap bekend as 'n weldoener wat nooit gehuiwer het om behoeftige mense te help nie. Die Steenkamp moord het weereens die fokus geplaas op die sinneloosheid en lafhartigheid van die daad, asook die kwesbaarheid van boere en plaaswerkers wat in die buitelug hulle werk moet doen in belang van die land. Die moord het onmeetbare hartseer en woede vir sy familie, plaaswerkers en die gemeenskap tot gevolg. Kriek het namens Agri SA sy meegevoel met die Steenkamp-familie uitgespreek en 'n beroep op die polisie gedoen om die aanvallers so spoedig moontlik aan te keer.

"Die onverantwoordelike en roekelose uitsprake oor die grondkwessie wat op 'n gereelde basis in die media gerapporteer word, lei tot die polarisasie van mense en gemeenskappe, asook die aanhitsing van geweld teenoor 'n sekere groep van die samelewing. Die tipe uitsprake hoort nie tuis in 'n samelewing waarin onderlinge respek en verdraagsaamheid noodsaaklik is vir nasiebou en stabiliteit nie", sê Kriek.

Kriek sê verder dat, "ongekwalifiseerde uitsprake oor grond katastrofies vir landbou-ontwikkeling en verdere belegging in die landbou is, veral omdat dit op ongegronde en verkeerde aannames gebaseer word. Hierdie uitsprake kan deur sekere individue vertolk word as 'n regverdiging om lede van die boerderygemeenskap aan te val en te vermoor".

"Ons glo dat daar nog genoegsame verbintenisse tot die handhawing van die beginsels van die Grondwet in die regering is om toe te sien dat landbou steeds sy regmatige plek in die ekonomie sal behou, werk te skep en toe te sien dat die landbou steeds voldoen aan die beginsel van voedselsekerheid", sê Kriek.

Kriek het 'n beroep gedoen op landbougemeenskappe om hulle plaaslike veiligheidstrukture te ondersteun en in gemeenskapsverband met die polisie saam te werk om hulle eie paraatheid op te skerp. Geen beskermingsmaatreëls is egter 'n waarborg dat 'n plaasaanval nie sal plaasvind nie, maar dit kan die aanval vertraag en inwoners 'n kans gee om noodmaatreëls in werking te stel.

Uitgereik deur Agri SA, Direktoraat: Korporatiewe Skakeling

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BENEFACTOR PAYS WITH HIS LIFE

A well-known farmer, benefactor and community leader, Dirk Steenkamp, was murdered early Sunday morning on his farm in the Vredefort district. “Murders and other violent crime afflicting the farming community bear testimony to the serious shortcomings in people’s values and lack of respect for life,” said Agri SA president Dan Kriek.

Steenkamp was known in the community as a benefactor who never hesitated to help people in need. The murder once again highlighted the senselessness and cowardliness of such deeds, as well as the vulnerability of farmers and farm workers who perform their work outdoors in the interest of the country. The murder has enraged and caused immeasurable heartache to his family, farm workers and the community. Kriek, on behalf of Agri SA, expressed his condolences to the Steenkamp family and called on the police to arrest the attackers as soon as possible.

“The irresponsible and reckless utterances around the land issue that are regularly reported in the media lead to the polarisation of people and communities, and incite violence aimed at a certain group of society. These types of statements do not belong in a society where mutual respect and tolerance are essential for nation-building and stability,” said Kriek.

Kriek added that “unqualified statements on land are catastrophic for agricultural development and further investment in agriculture, especially since they are based on unfounded and incorrect assumptions. Such utterances could be interpreted by certain individuals as justification for attacking and murdering members of the farming community.”

“We believe there is still sufficient commitment within government to the principles of the Constitution to make sure that agriculture maintains its rightful place in the economy, to create jobs and to ensure that the sector can adhere to the principle of food security,” said Kriek.

Kriek called on agricultural communities to support their local security structures and to work with the police within community context to improve their own safety. However, no protection measure serves as a guarantee that a farm attack will not take place, but it could delay an attack and give residents a chance to take emergency measures.

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