

# Farm murders: South Africans urged to observe 'Black Monday'

AfriForum and AgriSA have joined the call for South Africans to wear black next week Monday to commemorate the lives of those killed in farm attacks. This comes after Chris Loubser, a farm manager on the farm of a well-known Franschhoek businessman, made an emotional video in which he pleaded with South Africans to stand together in support of the cause.

Loubser's video was inspired by a recent farm attack in which Joubert Conradie was shot dead on his property in the Klapmuts area in Stellenbosch. Loubser said he knew Conradie from agricultural events in the area. He made the video in his car while parked in a vineyard.

Civil rights group AfriForum said it "wholeheartedly" supported Loubser's initiative and would like to encourage their members and all communities to support "Black Monday".

"It is important that people take a public stand and this action is an opportunity to do just that," deputy CEO of AfriForum Ernst Roets said.

## Farmers paying 'the highest price'

Presenting the national crime statistics for the 2016/17 financial year on Tuesday, Police Minister Fikile Mbalula said he was in contact with the farming community regarding farm attacks, and that the police were implementing a rural safety strategy.



Increase in violent crime raising concerns about safety of rural communities, farmers

25 Oct 2017



Mbalula said he had met with farmers' organisation AgriSA, which he said was also using its resources to help with rural safety.

"I don't want to argue with people about rural safety," the minister said. He said while the reality was that there were people who were racist, "there are farmers who are patriots in our country who need safety and support from the police".

AgriSA has also called for an end to violence against farming communities.

## **'52 murders a day'**

AgriSA president Dan Kriek said farm attacks and their brutality must be strongly condemned by all South Africans. "We think of the thousands of fellow South Africans who have lost their lives during the past year as a result of violent crime, 52 murders a day. Many farmers and farmworkers count among those who have paid the highest price," Kriek said.

He said 34,000 farmers were suffering the effects of drought, natural disasters and policy uncertainty, while also trying to protect their lives and produce food for 55 million South Africans.

He said farmers were vulnerable.

"It has long been time for the public and the government to take note of the brutality of farm attacks, as well as the onslaught aimed at members of the farming community."

*Source: News24*

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