

# 'President must take action'

## **POLICE INACTION:** STATE SECURITY MINISTERS IN THE FIRING LINE FOLLOWING UNREST

→ **'He must demand answers on why some things happened.'**

Rorisang Kgosana

**P**resident Cyril Ramaphosa has to clean up his house after ample warnings of the violence looming, but no plans put in place to contain it.

The likes of Carl Niehaus, the suspended spokesperson of the disbanded uMkhonto we Sizwe Military Veterans Association (MKMVA), long warned of unrest should former president Jacob Zuma be arrested. But police and state security ministers did nothing to prevent the mayhem and riots last week, said analysts.

Ramaphosa admitted in his ad-

dress on Friday they were poorly prepared for the looting, riots and public violence, which led to the death of over 200 people and damage to 161 malls and shopping centres last week.

"While we commend the brave actions of our security forces, we must admit that we did not have the capabilities and plans to respond swiftly," Ramaphosa said, following his visit to KwaZulu-Natal.

He said he would undertake a "thorough and critical review" of the poor preparedness and response.

While political analyst Levy Ndou commended Ramaphosa for his honesty, this admission, however, meant Ramaphosa would have to act particularly against Police Minister Bheki Cele, his police commissioner General Khehla Sitole, as well as State Security Minister Ayanda Dlodlo and her team.

This was because citizens re-

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lied on the state for their protection and that of properties, but nothing seemed to be done to prepare for the unrest, said Ndou.

"If you have Niehaus and [MKMVA president Kenny] Maphatsoe saying three months ago that if you arrest Zuma there will be unrest, and you don't prepare yourself for that, it means you deliberately chose not to do anything about it. Then the president must act.

"If you have more than 200 people who have died, surely someone must take responsibility for the loss of life? Cele and Dlodlo have a lot of explanations to give

to all of us," said Ndou.

The two portfolios of police and state security departments have gone through instability in recent years.

This includes scandals around former state security minister David Mahlobo and his alleged friendship with a Chinese rhino poacher kingpin, as well as former State Security Agency boss Arthur Fraser being implicated in allegations of malfeasance during his tenure.

"This looting is a result of corruption of intelligence. How can they pick up that a storm is coming when their own office has been in a mess for a long time?" said Prof Barry Hanyane, political analyst at North-West University.

"Then comes Cele himself. He says that he planted intelligence in Nkandla. Surely, starting from the alleged Twitter accounts of Zuma's kids to what is said on the

ground should have given an indication that these people are going to retaliate... Why didn't he activate an operation which allows him to get deployments from other provinces?"

While the Democratic Alliance has called on Ramaphosa to fire Cele and Dlodlo, this could lead to the risk of appointing someone not suited for the job, said Ndou.

"There is an element of recklessness. But he must not reshuffle. He must demand answers on why some things happened."

Hanyane said the entire security cluster needed to work together to regain confidence from the public.

"Is Cele ready for this job? He can go public and say they have arrested 12 people but we are interested in the prosecution to make sure the state is working," he said. – rorisangh@citizen.co.za

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