

Press

Release

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South African Institute of Race Relations
The power of ideas

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Ramaphosa lies on US TV

A [video clip](#) has emerged of President Cyril Ramaphosa lying to a journalist in the United States about the murder of farmers in South Africa and violent land invasions in the country.

In the 1:23 minute-long clip, Mr Ramaphosa tells the journalist that ‘there are no killings of farmers or white farmers in South Africa’ and ‘there are no land grabs in South Africa’.

Both of Mr Ramaphosa’s statements are untrue.

Data produced by the South African Police Service shows that 62 farmers and farm workers were murdered in the country in the 2017/18 financial year. The same police data shows that 353 such murders occurred since 2012/13.

An analysis published by Dr James Myburgh, editor of Politicsweb.co.za, showed that the murder rate for commercial farmers and their families in South Africa was far higher than the national average. According to that analysis South Africa’s average murder rate was 34 per 100 000 in 2016/17, while that of commercial farming households was 52.8 per 100 000, and 108 for farmers.

IRR analysts have also demonstrated that a simple media scan will offer up examples of violent land and farm invasions across a number of South Africa’s provinces, including the Free State, Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal.

Mr Ramaphosa’s denial of farm killings and land invasions comes as his government is under growing pressure to abandon threats to seize private property without compensation.

Those threats have done much damage both to foreign and domestic investor sentiment and contributed to tipping the South African economy into recession.

The IRR has long advocated for property rights to be extended to all South Africans and has lobbied the South African government to support emerging black commercial producers by providing them with title, cheap financing, and proper extension services.

IRR CEO Dr Frans Cronje said: 'Mr Ramaphosa's comments are offensive to the victims of farm murders – black and white – and to the millions of South Africans who live with insecure title to the properties they occupy.'

'Retreating into the realm of fiction will not help to break the political and economic impasse that has been triggered by the government's attempts to dilute property rights.'

'What is necessary is to face the hard facts that the policy of expropriation without compensation has been a political and economic disaster, and to abandon that policy and replace it with new and effective models of land reform that secure and expand the property rights of all South Africans in order to stabilize the economy while at the same time ensuring that proper restitution takes place.'

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