

11 July 2022

The President
Mr C. Ramaphosa
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PRETORIA
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Dear Mr Ramaphosa

POLICE MINISTER BHEKI CELE HAS DEMONSTRATED HE IS UNFIT FOR HIS CRITICAL POSITION

I write this letter in my capacity as CEO of the civil rights organisation AfriForum regarding Bheki Cele, the Minister of Police, who is failing in his mandate to protect citizens. Mr Cele continues to demonstrate an unfitness to occupy this very important position.

As an organisation with over 300 000 members that we represent, AfriForum is deeply concerned about the conduct and failures of Mr Cele.

It has recently come to light that the South African Police Service (SAPS) has lost more than 1 300 detectives in the last two years. Because we live in a country where 67 people are murdered every day, it is unacceptable that these vacancies have not yet been filled.

In another shocking incident recently at a community policing engagement in Gugulethu, Mr Cele repeatedly screamed “Shut up!” and “Get out!” to a civil rights lobby group leader, who was then forcefully removed from the public meeting by SAPS officers. His behaviour is nothing new: In 2020 Mr Cele also went on a rant against concerned citizens at a meeting of the farming community in Normadien.

This disturbing incident was only the latest in a long list of incidents and failures that demonstrate Mr Cele’s unfitness for his position. Mr Cele was recently also allegedly implicated in a R47 million tender scandal regarding 2010 FIFA World Cup accommodation by one of his top cops. The Public Protector found in 2012 that then Police Commissioner General Bheki Cele was guilty of improper conduct and maladministration regarding a R500 million lease for the Sanlam Middestad Building in Pretoria. Subsequently, a board of enquiry found Cele unfit for office, which resulted in his suspension.

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• **Registration number:** 2005/042861/08 • **NGO number:** 054 - 590

Mr Cele's failures also constitute a long list. Crime is out of control and worsening. Last week 14 people were killed in a mass shooting at a Soweto tavern. Under his watch tens of thousands of SAPS firearms as well as ammunition have gone missing. Another example of Mr Cele negligence is the shutdown of the SAPS's internal systems due to non-payment of the service provider. Even though Mr Cele has often claimed that rural security will be addressed, farm murders remain a major concern. It was also under his watch in 2021 that South Africa experienced the worst riots, unrest and looting since 1994. Many communities were left defenceless and had to take their safety into their own hands.

Mr Cele verbally attacked a frustrated member of a traumatised community in which a brutal farm murder took place; he walked the beaches, harassing citizens for the most insignificant "contraventions"; he stated on national television that he does not know who the Head of Crime Intelligence is.

Mr Cele has demonstrated that he lacks the skills and temperament to fill his position. He is clearly unfit to be Minister of Police. AfriForum therefore demands that Mr Cele be dismissed as Minister of Police.

I appreciate your time and hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely



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