



## The people are getting restless...

The past weeks we've seen riots, unrests, marches, protests; we've seen that the people are getting restless. They are restless because university fees are going up, because of service delivery, because of a lack of "transformation", because of poverty, unemployment, and the list goes on. The people are restless because things are bad, and things are likely to get worse and then people will get even more restless.

And what is wrong? The economy is hardly growing, probably in a recession, and a weak economy means poverty, unemployment; hard times for all. But why is the economy not growing?

Surely, international developments, low commodity prices, a rising dollar, a falling renminbi, the financial crisis (already many years ago) are all affecting the SA economy. Surely all sorts of "challenges", historic, transformation, "capacity" can also be blamed. But it is simply misleading to imply that all else is good. In fact, "all else" is mostly to be blamed for the current miserable malady of this country!

A growing economy will, like a rising tide lift all boats, make achieving all those wonderful things we all care for possible. Less poverty, lower unemployment, good healthcare, education, housing, safety, everything. Yet the economy is struggling, suffering, contracting and shrinking away because this country is consuming itself!

We are consuming our infrastructure because we don't maintain the existing infrastructure and don't create (enough) new capital; Eskom is the most prominent example. We are consuming our state owned enterprises;

just about all of them are bankrupt under the leadership of cadres, and therefore require massive financial support from an overburdened taxpayer.

We have consumed our civil service and used it to expand political influence, as an overpaid job creation agency, as a further experiment for a "developmental" state. Instead of supporting the private sector the civil service has become the reason why the economy exist. We are consuming the private sector by threatening it, restraining it, parasitizing it and scaring it away with our laws, requirements and demands.

Finally, we've now also consumed our leadership that capitulates whenever enough pressure is applied, that changes views, believes, ideologies and policies in a confusing and haphazard manner. A leadership that is associated with inefficiency, corruption and incompetence. A leadership that's not leading.

In the current environment we will stagger forward until the next wave of frustrated people demand something somewhere. Until we reach a real crisis, another international financial crisis, or something locally; perhaps a drought and sharply higher food prices?

Hungry people can be more than restless...

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