

Trump's Sandton Drive date



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If the US president's entourage must use Leila Khaled Drive during November's G20 Summit, he will know it's a deliberate personal insult.

Ward councillors representing residents and businesses around Sandton Drive have special interest in the latest noise between US President Donald Trump and President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Sandton Drive will be in use during November's G20 summit of world leaders. Will the divisive furore about renaming the street after Palestinian plane hijacker Leila Khaled be over by then?

Trump was the target in 2018 when an Al Jama-ah councillor tabled a motion in the Johannesburg City Council to rename Sandton Drive. Trump was lambasted for his views on SA land expropriation. He was also accused of instigating genocide against Palestinians.

The street was deemed appropriate because it houses the US consulate. If Trump's entourage must use Leila Khaled Drive during November's G20 Summit, he will know it's a deliberate personal insult.

Is that something Ramaphosa would try to avoid? Maybe not.

In 2018, Ramaphosa verbally attacked his American counterpart: "I don't know what Trump has to do with South African land, because he's never been here. He must keep his America; we will keep Africa." (Shades of Robert Mugabe's 2002 rant against former UK prime minister Tony Blair: "Keep your England and let me keep my Zimbabwe.")

This time, both Ramaphosa and Trump have made statements brash enough to stir emotions.

When Trump said "terrible things, horrible things" were happening in South Africa, he was referring to Expropriation Act.

"They're taking away land, they're confiscating land."

Trump was mistaken. The Expropriation Act recently signed by Ramaphosa does not say what many critics think it does. People are con-

fusing it with the earlier furore over Section 25 of the South African constitution.

Despite a campaign lasting more than four years, a Bill aimed at changing Section 25 to enable expropriation without compensation (EWC) failed in 2022.

EFF leader Julius Malema correctly describes the new law as a "mild and cosmetic intervention".

The Expropriation Act is not EWC in disguise. It does not change the constitution.

However, internal contradictions in the new law may lead to it being overturned by the Constitutional Court because the sequence of expropriation proceedings described in Sections 7 and 8 of the Expropriation Act conflicts with those in Section 19.

As Public Works Minister Dean Macpherson said on Monday: "Section 25 of the Constitution remains firmly in place, enshrining property rights in the highest law of our country".

He said no-one in South Africa is having their land confiscated, adding that, as minister responsible for the Bill, he will never allow land grabs.

While Trump is wrong about the Expropriation Act, his unofficial advisor and influencer Elon Musk correctly asks: "Why do you have openly racist ownership laws?"

Indeed, there are 120 South African laws discriminating against minorities.

Much jingoistic bravado is directed against Trump and Musk by economic illiterates to whom deliberate exclusion of minorities is irrelevant.

They pretend any US actions will be of no consequence and that Trump will tremble at our retaliation.

They blame AfriForum for bringing SA race laws to Trump's attention. But the race laws themselves are economically ruinous.

Any pressure to relieve them should be applauded. Imagine welcoming G20 leaders to a nonracist South Africa, on Sandton Drive.