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**PRESS STATEMENT: KZN MEC FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DARD) CYRIL XABA, VISITS THE FAMILY OF SLAIN ESTCOURT FARMER MALCOLM GREEN**

Farm attacks undermine all our efforts to grow the agricultural sector and create much-needed jobs, KZN MEC Cyril Xaba said yesterday. This was after he had conveyed his condolences to the family of slain Estcourt farmer Malcolm Green. MEC Xaba condemned the brutal killing and said that the death of a single farmer was a death too many. "We need extraordinary measures to confront this scourge in our society," the MEC added.

He assured Ruth Green, wife of the late farmer, her son Stafford and daughter-in-law Bryony that he had committed his department to work on assisting the police in their search for the attackers. MEC Xaba promised to work closely with the KZN MEC for Community Safety and Liaison, Willies Mchunu in "mounting an unprecedented search for the perpetrators of this callous deed."

MEC Xaba noted recent statistics which showed that in KwaZulu-Natal in 2014, there were 5 farm murders and 28 farm attacks – 33 incidents altogether. In 2013, there were 10 murders and 47 attacks and in 2012 there were 4 murders and 45 attacks. He said these figures remained unacceptably high. The MEC was grateful that there had been a hundred percent arrests and convictions in the case of all five farm murders last year. However, he added that this was cold comfort as lives had been lost. "What we need is a deterrent, to find ways to prevent attacks otherwise all our efforts to boost food security and grow the economy through agriculture is being undermined," MEC Xaba said.

The MEC visited the Green family with Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, General Bheki Cele. This was after they conferred on Monday evening and prioritised the visit to the family to show Government's strong condemnation of farm attacks. Cele, in his role as Deputy Minister, has been given the task of overseeing issues involving farm security. After the meeting, MEC Xaba and Cele met with farmers in the area to discuss their challenges in this regard and find a way forward.



Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, General Bheki Cele with the Honourable MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development in KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Cyril Xaba greeting Mr Stafford Green, son of Mr Malcolm Green



General Bheki Cele and MEC Cyril Xaba conveying their condolences to the Green family and the farming community



General Bheki Cele and MEC Cyril Xaba conveying their condolences to Mrs Ruth Green, wife of the late Mr Malcolm Green

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