**CRIME COMMENT 1: MEMBER OF SECURITY CLUSTER, VICTIM OF CRIME THRICE IN TWO MONTHS.**

**Dr Chris de Kock, Analyst: crime, violence and crowd behaviour.**

The ink on my article this week(27 July to 2 August) titled: “South Africans are experiencing a deepening crime crisis, consequently the crime statistics should be released quarterly.”([www.crimefactssouthafrica](http://www.crimefactssouthafrica)) was not yet dry and an article appeared in the **Sunday Times** of today( August 2,2015) under the title: “Minister checks into hotel ‘after home break-ins.’” In short the article states that Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Michael Masutha( which is also one of the key members of the Justice, Crime Prevention, and Security Cluster ) experienced two, but actually three house breakings/ robberies between May 23 and 15 July. On the 23rd of May robbers “ransacked” the Minister’s house in a secure complex in Waterkloof, Pretoria while he locked himself in a bedroom. Then in the middle of the night (at about 2am) of the 15th of July he had to locked himself in his bedroom again when he was awoken by the alarm and he heard voices in the house. He tried to contact his protectors without success, but luckily the private security company which monitor the alarm came to his rescue. When they arrived they found no suspects in the house. But according to the Sunday Times the house breakers/robbers timed the response time of the security company and they then came back the same night to take the curved plasma TV and that they did in five minutes. It is not clear from the report if Minister Masutha was still in the house at the time that the suspects came back for the TV (which according to the author of this crime comment should be count 3). It is only clear that he now lives in a hotel while the security of his house is upgraded.

This incident demonstrates the following:

a) **That South Africans indeed experience a deepening in the crime crisis!** If a senior Minister of the Justice Crime Prevention and Security Cluster becomes a victim in his house, in a secure complex, trice in two months, what can the ordinary South African in their ordinary homes in for example: Diepsloot, Tembisa, Inanda, Khayelitsha, New Brighton, Humewood, Polokwane, Welkom, Cradock, and farm xx in Brits expect? One can just hope that the members of this cluster are aware of this crisis and that they very frequently discuss and strategize on their broad outcome as described in the Strategic Plan, 2014-2019, South African Police Service (p.4): “All people in South Africa are and feel safe.” One thing is for sure the average South African can in all probability not afford the kind of security that the Minister had and is now provided with, while he stays in a hotel (this author strongly support the fact that the Minister is staying in a hotel while the security at his house is upgraded, because he is a key figure in the security of SA). South Africans expect that SAPS will ensure there constitutional right of freedom from fear, since one of the largest proportions of their tax money is spend on policing.

**b) The South African Police Service actually provide policing by chance instead of proactive Intelligence Led Policing (ILP).** The **Sunday Times** article states:” Mhaga( Mthunzi Mhaga the Minister’s spokesperson) said “ …the Brooklyn police were investigating the break-ins.” Whenever there is a crime like this, the police are always investigating. One just get the impression that there is no intelligence focussed prevention. It is highly unlikely that the Minister’s home is broken into thrice in two months, without any other resident in the vicinity not also becoming a victim of similar crimes. There is a high probability that there is a crime hotspot in this area and that the same group of criminals are the culprits behind this.

This author lives in a townhouse complex in the east of Pretoria and in basically the same time period when the Minister became a victim there were 10 attempted and real housebreakings in 40 units (25% in 8 weeks). Some of these may not be registered as housebreakings or attempted house breakings by SAPS, but as malicious damage to property. Furthermore this wave of housebreakings which all occur at night while the residents are sleeping, does in all probability not only occur in this one complex but also in other complexes and houses in the vicinity. There was no more police visibility in the environment in this period, actually for the last year or two, one seldom see a police vehicle in the environment. Now either the police management at the station is not aware of a developing crime problem because the crime analyst at the station are not doing a proper analysis or they either don’t know how to operationalise the intelligence or they don’t have the resources to do it.

SA is on a slippery crime slope if the police is always investigating, because they never prevent.