

SACCI Media Release

Tuesday

23 August 2011



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **SACCI REFLECTS ON THE IMPACT OF THE MUNICIPAL WORKERS' STRIKE**

In a statement issued today the CEO of the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SACCI), Mr Neren Rau, said:

#### **QUOTE:**

The South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SACCI) notes that members of the South African Municipal Workers' Union have shown mixed responses to the current strike.

SACCI commends the workers for the relatively peaceful action in some municipalities, notably in the Border-Kei area, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg and Middelburg. At the same time SACCI condemns the behavior that has occurred in others such as the trashing of streets in Cape Town, Durban, Mokopani and Nelspruit. SACCI is concerned at the cost of such action which apart from the trashing also includes:

- The destruction of more than R92 000 worth of plastic bins in Cape Town
- The stealing of wares from pavement traders
- The throwing of sewerage waste against doors and on verandas of the Ditsobotla municipality's offices in Lichtenburg in the North West, not to mention the negative impact that this behavior has on business operations.

It is therefore not surprising that there have been intensified calls for legislation to hold unions accountable for the actions of their striking members. In this regard SACCI holds the view that while labour has a constitutional right to strike, behavior during strike action should not impinge on the rights that business has as juristic persons under the constitution.

SACCI supports the statement made by the Cape Town municipality that data on vandalism and the cost of damage caused by striking workers will be used in disciplinary action and in the recovery of costs from the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU).

SACCI also agrees with the Ditsobotla municipal manager that the throwing of sewerage waste against municipal property is uncivilized and cannot be seen as relevant during a strike over salaries.

SACCI is concerned that SAMWU ascribes the unacceptable behavior to a "third force" and believes that the Union should be held responsible even though it has reiterated that it does not condone the looting and violence against members of the public. SACCI calls on SAMWU to act on its undertaking to institute disciplinary action against union members who are involved in these activities.

#### **UNQUOTE**