

IN REPLY TO DR MOLEFE

Dr Mphane Molefe

Director: Veterinary Public Health

Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

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Dear Dr Molefe,

Please be assured, I have no malicious intent as you suggest. On the contrary, my history shows I have dedicated my adult life to nurturing empathy in our children for the sake of the animals and most importantly, for the sake of our children and society at large. I have answered your questions in blue text below.

1. Is your narrative that this happens only to animals that are sourced from South Africa?
No, most definitely not. If I had been successful in finding someone in Haifa, Israel, who was prepared to follow the recent disembarkation from the Bahijah of sheep and cattle from Australia, I would have used photographs from Haifa instead.
2. Why is South Africa featuring prominently on the headlines and in the story as if South Africa is responsible for the way the animal was slaughtered?
I am saying that the animals we send overseas for slaughter, not only endure tortuous journeys but can be subjected to slaughter such as in the photograph, and that the slaughter depicted in the photograph is violent and cruel and does not support South Africa's 'humane' slaughter regulations.
3. If the animal was flown by air to Mauritius, would your narrative have been the same?
The narrative is very clearly about long distance transport by sea for slaughter in foreign countries and that animals suffer in this long-distance sea trade whether they originate from Australia, Brazil, England or wherever.
4. Do you have evidence that the bull as reflected on the photograph is from South Africa, and if so, please provide evidence?
As a journalist, I cannot name my source but the source was alerted to the imminent arrival of a shipment from South Africa at Port Louis and was asked if possible to follow one of the trucks taking cattle from the shipment to its destination. I do not have any reason to believe the source gave me false information.
5. In your understanding, at what point does an animal exported from South Africa stop being a South African animal? Is this a South African bull or a bull imported from South Africa?
In my view animals born in South Africa are South African animals and because they are sentient, and not products, we must phase-out sea journeys to slaughter.

Your story, which is about the way animals are slaughtered and compliance with the UN right of the child, has nothing to do with South Africa in this instance and you are merely using the name of the country maliciously to achieve a narrative of dealing with exportation of live animal by sea.

No, this is not correct. My article has no malicious intent. It is about discussing the introduction of a South African phase-out and ultimate ban on shipping animals by sea to foreign countries for slaughter, as, for example, Australia is now doing. I am also saying that in shipping our animals to other countries for slaughter we have no control as to how they are slaughtered. An additional issue is that Mauritius clearly allows children to witness slaughter and this is in contravention of GC26.

Thank you for the trouble you have taken to engage with me on these issues. I do so hope the South African Department of Agriculture will choose to follow the trend to replace the sea-trade-to-slaughter with chilled and frozen meat, as part of a move towards a kinder world. We surely need to do everything in our power to achieve a kinder world for our children to inherit.

Kind regards,



LOUISE VAN DER MERWE

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