

Riots in South Africa as Former President Zuma is Sentenced to Prison for Corruption

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Some are calling events over the last week South Africa's "darkest hour".

Is it more than a spontaneous triggering of anger brought about by the jailing of former President Jacob Zuma? Many analysts say it is and that there is a "third force" sympathetic to the former president at play.

The government's language has changed significantly, from not saying much in the early days of the lawlessness to calling out what it says has been "economic sabotage". Some commentators have even gone as far as to warn that the unrest has the hallmarks of an "attempted coup" and an "insurrection".

President Cyril Ramaphosa said that the violence was pre-planned, but did not said who he suspects was behind it.

Ferial Haffajee, associate editor of the Daily Maverick, has written about a coordinated strategy of chaos, masterminded by a dozen close associates of the former president.

Referencing a number of senior sources from inside the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and intelligence services, Haffajee has sketched an outline of that strategy – from the burning of transport trucks in KwaZulu-Natal seen in the early days of the insurrection, to the blocking of key routes from the port in Durban to the economic heart of South Africa, Gauteng. The suggestion is this was intended to further undermine and weaken an already fragile economy, and by extension Mr. Ramaphosa's government.

This could be coming from within both the ruling party and the country's intelligence services.

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