

# Toyota might stop investing in South Africa after KZN violence - UPDATE

Toyota said it's unsure about continuing investment in KwaZulu-Natal and the country and that it's worried about the violence in the province.



Toyota's regional officer for Africa, Toshimitsu Imai, expressed his concerns to eThekweni mayor Mxolisi Kaunda in a letter, according to a [Netwerk24](#) report. The authenticity of the letter was confirmed by Mzolisi Witbooi, manager for corporate communications at Toyota South Africa Motors (TSAM).

In the letter, Toyota also asked for feedback on the city's plans to bring order and stability, so that it can assess plans for investment and production.

The temporary closure of Toyota's Durban plant and the Durban harbour has negatively impacted the company's ability to fulfil its export mandate, according to [MyBroadband](#).

## R2.43bn investment announced in 2019

Toyota announced in 2019 that its investing R2.43bn in the production of a new passenger vehicle in South Africa. In January 2021 the company also announced that it will be manufacturing the new Corolla Cross in the country in the fourth quarter of the year.

TSAM's CEO Andrew Kirby said the following at the time: "We will be manufacturing the Corolla Cross in both right- and left-hand drive for South Africa and the rest of Africa right here at the Prospecton Plant in Durban."

Nigel Ward, TSAM's executive vice president, said: "It is also the first time for us to manufacture using the Toyota New Global Architecture — which allows us to keep up with global technology and trends."

Imai said the riots have a significant impact on its plans to further invest in the country, especially when it comes to its alternative energy cars.

## **Update: The matter has been sensationalised**

According to [this Carmag report](#), Toyota will not stop investing KwaZulu-Natal and the country. The company said that the matter has been sensationalised but confirmed that the letter is real.

"Our focus as a concerned corporate citizen is to ensure that local government has a definite plan of action to protect jobs and investment," TSAM said in a statement.

TSAM will reportedly resume operations at its Prospecton plant on 20 July. However, it said the company could not at this stage assess the impact on production. "It has, without a doubt, made targets more challenging but in the true Toyota spirit, we are changing our plans to recover as quickly as possible to avoid delaying future product introductions in particular."

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