



#NoToHate

DECLARATION OF DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY: AGAINST XENOPHOBIA, AFROPHOBIA, AND RACISM

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is founded on the unalterable principles of human dignity, the achievement of equality, and the advancement of human rights and freedoms, explicitly declaring that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity;

AND WHEREAS we note with grave concern the calculated, wildfire spread of coordinated xenophobia, Afrophobia, and racism across digital platforms and within our communities, which has escalated into physical vigilante violence, intimidation, and systematic attacks designed to delegitimize critical democratic institutions, including Chapter 9 bodies such as the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC);

AND WHEREAS we reaffirm the core mandates of the Bill of Rights—specifically **Section 9 (Equality), Section 10 (Human Dignity), and Section 12 (Freedom and Security of the Person)**—which guarantee every individual, regardless of nationality or legal status, the right to be free from unfair discrimination and all forms of violence from either public or private sources;

AND REAFFIRMING the foundational spirit of “**BOKSBURG DECLARATION ADOPTED BY THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN MIGRATION NETWORK (SAMIN)**”, which asserts that refugees, migrants, and immigrants must receive exactly the same standards of justice, safety, and constitutional protection as citizens, and that true social cohesion requires active, organized mobilization against structural exclusion;

AND RECOGNISING the work undertaken by the Siyafana Sonke Action Campaign in developing the foundational principles and call to action of this declaration.

NOW, THEREFORE, we adopt this solemn Declaration, binding our organizations, our workplaces, and our communities to the following fundamental principles and distinct operational responsibilities.



FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

- 1. We reject xenophobia, Afrophobia, racism, tribalism, ethnic chauvinism and all forms of scapegoating.** No community can be liberated by turning on another oppressed community. No worker can advance by attacking another worker.
- 2. We defend the unity of all who are exploited, impoverished and excluded under the current system.** South African workers, migrant workers, unemployed people, informal traders, shack dwellers, women, youth, students and poor communities have a common interest in fighting the unjust conditions imposed on them.
- 3. We recognise the legitimate anger of working-class and poor communities.** People are right to be angry about unemployment, crime, corruption, hunger, collapsing services and the cost of living. But that anger must be directed at the real causes of the crisis and at those who hold political and economic power over society, not at vulnerable people with the least power.
- 4. We oppose vigilante violence, intimidation and fascist methods.** There is nothing democratic, progressive or community-minded about pulling children out of schools, blocking people from clinics, threatening informal traders, attacking migrants or terrorising communities.
- 5. We fight for jobs, services, dignity and justice for all.** The answer to the crisis is not deportation, scapegoating or street thuggery. The answer is decent work, functioning municipalities, quality public services, an end to austerity, accountability for corruption, investment in communities, and an economy that serves people before profit.
- 6. We build solidarity from below.** Our strength lies in organised communities, workplaces, campuses, faith formations, social movements, trade unions, migrant organisations, youth formations, civics and all democratic forces acting together.

SECTORAL RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PRACTICAL ACTIONS

SECTION I: THE GOVERNMENT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT SECTOR

The Rights & Responsibilities Framework (Sections 9, 12, & 181)

The State bears the ultimate positive obligation to protect **Section 9 (Equality)** and ensure that no person is unfairly discriminated against based on race, ethnic origin, or nationality. Under **Section 12 (Freedom and Security of the Person)**, everyone has the right to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private sources. Crucially, under **Section 181(3)**, other organs of state are constitutionally mandated to assist and protect Chapter 9 institutions to ensure their independence, impartiality, dignity, and effectiveness.

Practical Actions Required:

- **Guarantee Equal Standards of Justice:** Aligned with **"BOKSBURG DECLARATION ADOPTED BY THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN MIGRATION NETWORK (SAMIN)"**, law enforcement and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) must ensure that non-nationals receive exactly the same standard of legal protection, swift investigation, and judicial recourse when reporting crimes or facing threats.
- **Prosecute Online Syndicates and Vigilantism:** Actively deploy the Cybercrimes Act and the Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Act to identify, unmask, and aggressively prosecute users and networks orchestrating coordinated digital violence or mobilizing physical vigilante action.
- **Enforce Accountability for State Officials:** Implement immediate disciplinary and legal measures against public officials, politicians, or civil servants who engage in xenophobic dog-whistling or use foreign nationals as political scapegoats for administrative failures.
- **Defend Accountability Bodies:** Proactively allocate intelligence and protective resources to secure the digital and physical operations of the SAHRC, treating online threats of violence against commissioners and staff as direct attacks on the rule of law.

SECTION II: CIVIL SOCIETY AND MASS FORMATIONS

The Rights & Responsibilities Framework (Section 7(2) & Social Justice)

While the State is the primary duty-bearer under **Section 7(2)** to respect, protect, promote, and fulfil the Bill of Rights, civil society and democratic mass formations hold the programmatic responsibility to enforce accountability. As highlighted in **"BOKSBURG DECLARATION ADOPTED BY THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN MIGRATION NETWORK (SAMIN)"**, civil society must actively bridge the gap between progressive constitutional jurisprudence and the real-world material conditions of vulnerable communities.

Practical Actions Required:

- **Convert Solidarity into Practice:** Where vulnerable communities are threatened, solidarity must become practical. Workers, communities, faith organisations, students, youth formations, social movements, trade unions, migrant organisations, civics and all democratic forces must build local structures of safety, political education, and collective defence.
- **Respond with Disciplined, Collective Action:** Where hatred is spread, it must be answered with truth and organisation. Where vigilante violence is normalised, democratic forces must respond with disciplined, peaceful, and collective counter-mobilization.
- **Drive Public Constitutional Education:** Conduct deep grassroots workshops to educate the public on the Bill of Rights, explicitly dismantling the false, divisive narrative that basic human rights apply only to citizens.
- **Launch Strategic Legal Action:** Utilize PEPUDA and the Equality Courts to launch public-interest litigation against negligent social media platforms and individual ringleaders who propagate systemic afrophobia and racism.
- **Independent Oversight and Data Collection:** Maintain independent, verifiable databases tracking online hate speech and offline xenophobic attacks, ensuring rigorous data is available to counter state denialism and push for systemic policy reforms.

SECTION III: THE MEDIA SECTOR AND DIGITAL PLATFORMS

The Rights & Responsibilities Framework (Section 16 & Section 10)

The media operates under **Section 16 (Freedom of Expression)** of the Bill of Rights. However, this right carries a strict constitutional boundary: Section 16(2) explicitly states that freedom of expression does not extend to the incitement of imminent violence or the advocacy of hatred based on race or ethnicity that constitutes incitement to cause harm. Furthermore, every platform provider, publisher, and individual possesses a duty to respect **Section 10 (Human Dignity)**.

Practical Actions Required:

- **Reject Xenophobic Narratives as “Activism”:** Public debate must be grounded in facts, accountability, and human dignity. Public leaders and the media must stop legitimising xenophobic narratives and vigilante politics as “community activism”.
- **Center Democratic and Working-Class Voices:** Media spaces must give deliberate platform to migrant organisations, working-class formations, community movements, trade unions, and democratic organisations of the poor who have long been organizing and fighting for real solutions to unemployment, poverty, corruption, collapsing services, and social decay.
- **Apply the “Do No Harm” Principle:** Actively verify that framing, headlines, and imagery regarding immigration do not expose vulnerable groups or journalists to heightened localized physical risk or digital harm.
- **Enforce Rigorous Comment and Platform Moderation:** Actively moderate digital forums and corporate social media channels (such as X/Twitter) to ensure comment sections are not weaponized as unchecked spaces for illegal hate speech and collective incitement.
- **Deconstruct Dehumanizing Vocabulary:** Reject xenophobic labels and sensationalized frames that strip individuals of their baseline constitutional right to human dignity.

REJECTION OF FALSE REPRESENTATION

The attempts made by formations such as March and March, Operation Dudula, and political parties and actors including ActionSA, the MKP and the Patriotic Alliance, to present xenophobic scapegoating as the commanding voice of communities is entirely dishonest.

These forces do not speak for the millions of workers, unemployed people, migrants, youth, women, informal traders, shack dwellers and poor communities struggling every day for jobs, land, housing, services, safety and dignity.

A CALL TO IMMEDIATE NATIONAL ACTION

Throughout June 2026 and beyond, people across South Africa are called on to demonstrate, organise, march, hold community meetings, conduct political education, build local solidarity structures and take visible action against xenophobia, Afrophobia, ethnic chauvinism, fascist intimidation, austerity, unemployment and collapsing public services.

This campaign is a call to draw the line against division, against fear, and against the working class and poor being turned against themselves while those responsible for the crisis remain untouched.

The answer to division is solidarity.

The answer to fear is organisation.

Solidarity is our defence.

Unity is our power.



ENDORSEMENTS

Organisations

Centre for Human Rights

Campaign for Free Expression

Nicole Fritz, *Executive Director*

Southern Africa Network for Immigrants and Refugees (SANIR)

Claude Marie Bernard Kayitare, *Head of Partnerships and Programmes*

Beautiful Rubies

Mariette Ngoie Masele, *Director*

African Chamber of Media

Sello Makgobatlou

South African National Editors' Forum (SANEF)

Reggy Moalusi, *Executive Director*

Disabled Migrants Rights Networking Organisation (DMRNO)

Brian Muziringa, *Executive Director*

Organisation for Charity Challenge & Sustained Advocacy

Lushiku Benjamin Tshiteya, *Executive Director*

One Heart One Love: Touching Lives, One Heart at a Time

John Hamisi, *Founder*

Pachdu LGBTIQ+ International

Masi Zhakata, *Founder and Executive Director*

Campaign for Free Expression

Ezekiel Kekana, *Head of Communication*

Centre for Analytics & Behavioural Change (CABC)

Kim Thipe, *Executive Director*

Moxii Africa

Noor Ahmad, *Communications Manager*

Individuals

Mabel Mosiamedi

Journalist, Soweto-Life News

Themba Nicollus George

Director, TN George Production

Dr Michael Cosser

Steffen Fischer

CharmenS

