



# The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa

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**TO: The Ugandan Embassy**

**From: The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa.**

**Re: Apology for the recent outbreak of xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals.**

Date: 2 June 2008.

As church leaders we wish to register our deep sadness for the recent outbreak of xenophobic animosity and violence against foreign nationals living in South Africa. We are truly ashamed at what has happened, just a few years after South Africa won its liberation, not without the sacrificial solidarity of the same nations whose citizens we have brutalized in the senseless violence of recent weeks and months. Please forgive us.

We wish to communicate as follows to peoples affected by the recent violence:

- As Churches, it is our observation that the vast majority of the people of South Africa do not support the acts of criminality and xenophobic violence perpetrated by a minority.
- Many organizations of civil society have expressed solidarity with victims of xenophobia.
- Churches have been among those at the forefront of relief and care for those affected. We are determined to do all in our power to use what influence we have to avoid the recurrence of these conflicts. Churches have embarked on several public demonstrations, public gatherings for civic education as well as practical care for victims.
- We are heartened by Government deployment of police and the military in order to isolate and neutralize those bent on committing acts of xenophobic criminality and violence. We are confident that with such display of political will at the highest level to act against these xenophobic outbursts, a return to normalcy will soon return.
- While ordinary South Africans, especially the poor, may have legitimate service delivery concerns with their government, the unleashing of black on black brutality that we have seen in recent weeks and months is totally unwarranted. It says a lot about our own self hatred as blacks, since only foreign nationals of African extraction have suffered violent attacks, none from other continents. We have perhaps underestimated the psychological damage to our collective psyche resulting from generations of oppression and abuse.

As churches we express our heartfelt condolences to the families of those affected, especially those who have lost loved ones. May God give us all the faith to believe in the ultimate triumph of good over evil. It is in the midst of the darkest night that we must await a new day of human solidarity.

**Signed: A delegation of TEASA church leaders.**

1. Zerilda Nel. TEASA Chairperson
2. M Ntilha
3. Trevor Ntilhola
4. Peter Tarental
5. Nimrod Kekana
6. Bishop Mtshengu Tshabalala
7. Reneilwe Ramashia
8. Marcus Maponya
9. Peter Moitse

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"I pray that they may all be one, Father!..." - John 17:21