

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**24 February 2017**

## **SACC CONDEMNS XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE**

*JOHANNESBURG:* The scenes of organized community protests leading to violent attacks, arson, looting and intimidation of foreign nationals are to be condemned without equivocation! The Churches of South Africa condemn these acts without reserve!

These campaigns are mounted with the explanation that some foreign nationals engage in drug and human trafficking. While there is reason to be concerned about crime, drugs and human trafficking, there is no justification for chasing after every fellow African who is non-South African simply because there are some who are believed to have conducted criminal offenses.

Crime is not new in South Africa, has there ever been a profiling and branding of whole communities with a negative and objectionable brush, except in apartheid South Africa where for being black you were suspect until proven otherwise? Is that how we black South Africans today choose to act against our sisters and brothers from the rest of the continent? God forbid! Where is our cultural ethos of Ubuntu/Botho? Law enforcement and the justice system should deal with criminals, and we should seek to strengthen those agencies of our constitution, and uphold the human rights of all people.

We are a Constitutional Democracy based on Human Rights and the dignity of all human beings. The violent scenes of organized activism against foreign nationals that spread across the world are a disservice and a disgrace for a society that is 75% Christian with the values of 'love God with all you are' and 'love your neighbour as you love yourself' they are a shame to a country that is 80% black African with the foundation of we are because others are - motho ke motho ka batho! Umuntu ngumuntu ngomunye umuntu!

Where has our humanity gone when we mobilize for this shameful and inhuman violence? Where are the anchors of our faith when we roar for the innocent blood of people we don't even know, just because they were born in another African country? Have we considered what this might mean for everything South African in the rest of the continent? Have we considered what it might mean for South Africa to be branded an outcast in the continent? Have we considered how this tendency endangers our sports clubs and national teams in continental campaigns?

We call on all faith communities, church leaders, community leaders, sports clubs and federation leaders, as well as government and political parties, to make a collective call on our communities to refrain from these actions. We should not and just cannot countenance an inter-African war in the streets and work places of South Africa.



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The SACC is calling on all churches to commit prayers for the Spirit of love, peace, kindness and self-control to prevail over the spirit of strife, enmity, fits of anger, rivalry and dissension. Let us work together for peaceful coexistence.

Phansi ngodlame phansi!!

**ENDS**

