



Southern Africa
Yearly Meeting

Open Letter to the SADC Heads of State and Government

On the occasion of: The 46th SADC Summit, Durban, South Africa, 17 August 2026

A Quaker call for peace, equality, justice, and the just sharing of our region's resources

We write as Quakers, out of a conviction that has guided our community for over three hundred years: that there is that of God in every person. This obliges us to see the full and equal humanity of every man, woman, and child within SADC's borders, regardless of nationality or papers. That conviction is being tested. Across the region, and with particular sharpness in South Africa, we are witnessing rising xenophobia and Afrophobia, attacks on foreign nationals, the scapegoating of migrants for economic hardship, and exclusionary rhetoric from public platforms. We have sat in worship with families and with migrants who live in daily fear simply for being African in another part of Africa. We cannot witness this in silence, and we do not believe SADC can afford to either.

Our testimonies speak directly to this moment. Peace - xenophobic violence, and the silence that permits it, cannot be tolerated by a community founded on regional peace and security. Equality - no person's worth is diminished by their nationality or migration status. Justice – we call for equal protection of the law, and accountability where officials or political actors incite or fail to prevent harm against foreign nationals. Community – a regional body that permits one member state's people to be turned against another's is a community in name only. Simplicity – we ask leaders to resist the easy politics of blame and do the harder work of honest governance. Care for one another and the earth – a community that cares for its people must also care for the land and resources their futures depend on.

We do not believe this violence arises from nowhere. It grows in the soil of unemployment, inequality, and the daily struggle for scarce resources – conditions that turn neighbours against one another. A just peace requires a just economy: fairer regional trade and labour arrangements, and the equitable sharing of our region's considerable wealth, so that no community feels it must fight another for too little.

We call on you to:

1. Publicly and unequivocally condemn xenophobic and Afrophobic violence and rhetoric wherever it occurs within SADC member states.
2. Ensure national governments investigate and hold accountable those who incite or carry out attacks on foreign nationals.
3. Uphold the rights and dignity of migrants, refugees, and displaced persons in line with SADC's own protocols and Pan-African solidarity.
4. Invest in fair labour mobility, equitable resource-sharing, and inclusive development, so that scarcity no longer breeds division.
5. Support truth-telling and community dialogue, so that healing can begin between communities set against one another.

We write as neighbours and co-inhabitants of this region, trusting that within every migrant and every leader alike there is a light that violence cannot extinguish. We hold your deliberations in

the Light, and ask that you meet this moment with the courage the promise of regional solidarity requires.

In Friendship and in hope,

The Quaker Community in Southern Africa Yearly Meeting on behalf of Friends across the region



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