

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SOUTH AFRICA MUST UNITE AGAINST VIOLENT CRIME

The African National Congress calls on the country's security services to work with communities and all social partners to combat violent crime.

The spate of recent deadly attacks on taverns and other public spaces is clearly intended to spread fear through communities and across the nation.

The ANC calls on the South African Police Service and other law enforcement agencies to dedicate personnel and resources to investigating these crimes and prosecuting those responsible. These investigations need to establish whether there is any connection between the various incidents and identify those responsible for directing them.

These crimes take place against the backdrop of increased poverty and unemployment in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the July 2021 unrest. They take place at a time when South Africans are experiencing a rise in the cost of living and the effects of load shedding.

These crimes highlight the severe problem of the proliferation of firearms in South Africa and the high levels of violence in our society. Part of our response to incidents of this nature is to address with urgency the social and economic conditions in which South Africans live.

It is vital that law enforcement agencies work closely with communities at a local level to improve community safety, intelligence gathering and policing. The ANC supports the work of the SAPS to re-establish Community Policing Forums, and calls on all communities to ensure that they are functioning and respond to the concerns of the people.

Through the Letsema Campaign, ANC branches will work with all residents and community formations to strengthen crime prevention efforts across the country. They will also support the Molo Makhelwane programme of the ANC Women's League to encourage people to know their neighbours, secure communities and take forward the fight against gender-based violence.

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The ANC welcomes the progress that has been made in strengthening the crime fighting capacity of the state, including:

- the recruitment of the first cohort of 12,000 new police personnel,
- the framework for the nationwide re-establishment of community policing forum
- the establishment by the SAPS of multi-disciplinary units to address crimes of economic sabotage and extortion at construction sites by so-called business forums,
- the operationalisation of the Border Management Authority, including the deployment this week of the first cohort of 200 guards to vulnerable border posts.

The ANC is concerned by the reckless posturing of some political parties and groupings, who are seeking to use these senseless killings for political gain. If we are to stop this onslaught against communities, we need to work together as all South Africans to find and prosecute those people who want our people to live in fear. We need to work together with the police and other security services to make our homes, streets, businesses and public spaces safe and secure.

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