



**PRESS RELEASE: ECOSOCC CONDEMNS XENOPHOBIC "AFROPHOBIC" ATTACKS ON AFRICAN CITIZENS IN SOUTH AFRICA.**

The Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the African Union (ECOSOCC) condemns the Xenophobic and/or Afrophobic attacks on African citizens of different nationalities in the Republic of South Africa. ECOSOCC is sad to learn that such incidents have occurred in a country for which Africans on the continent and the Diaspora sacrificed so dearly to ensure independence and black majority rule.

ECOSOCC perceives all Africans as sharing a common African citizenship, albeit of different nationalities, carved up by departing colonial powers to perpetuate their own interests and influence. ECOSOCC is therefore appalled to see gruesome pictures of African citizens of South African extraction brutally assaulting, killing, looting and burning the properties of their kith and kins from other parts of the continent. This is a blot on the African landscape which negates the very essence of the African Union and its purpose, principles and values. This deplorable situation makes a mockery of the people- centric orientation of the African Union in general and ECOSOCC in particular and ECOSOCC offers a sincere apology to all victims of this shameful exercise.

Beyond this, ECOSOCC recognizes the need for timely and appropriate action to ensure that this episode ends immediately and never recurs. Accordingly, the Organ proposes a framework of action embracing the following measures:

1. The Government and people of South Africa must take timely and immediate action to ensure the cessation of all acts of hostilities in this context and to assure the security of lives and property of all Africans and indeed all people in South Africa regardless of their state of origin. As a logical corollary, the instigators and perpetrators of the gruesome acts must be brought to justice, irrespective of their status in the community. The South African government should also encourage all stakeholders and the broad strata of South Africa Society to embrace civil dialogue rather than violent interactions as a means of expressing opinions.
2. Compensation should be paid to all victims while political, economic and psychological policies and programs of restitution and reinsertion should be put in place to ensure the reintegration of victims in society. The policies and programs should be conceived in the immediate, short, medium and long terms. Psychological measures are required immediately

to address related traumas associated with the impact of this terrible and nauseating experience.

3. The Commission of the African Union as the Secretariat of the Union should convene an Extra-Ordinary Emergency session of the Union to discuss the situation and authorize a framework of action for addressing it on a collective basis. They should also use the experience to conceive Pan-African programs and policies that will prevent its recurrence.

4. The episode draws attention to the need to fast track the integration and development agenda of the African Union and to move more rapidly towards the creation of the United States of Africa. For it is only when Africans are living together in this political and economic context envisioned by the founding parents of the African Union that we can be rest assured that this shameful exercise will never occur again.

In conclusion, ECOSOCC on its own part will be sending a follow-up mission to South Africa to consult with the Government and the African civil society community in South Africa on what should be done now and in the longer term. In the course of the mission, ECOSOCC will also do its best to promote order and tranquility. We kindly request the support of the AU Commission, the Pan-African Parliament, the Court of Justice, the African Commission in Banjul, other AU organs and the African people in particular to take appropriate measures to support our activities and efforts in this regard.

Joseph Chilengi,  
Presiding Officer, ECOSOCC.