

## SOL PLAATJE UNIVERSITY STATEMENT ON THE CURRENT WAVE OF XENOPHOBIA ATTACKS

As we are sure the majority in South Africa have shared over these past few days, we at Sol Plaatje University have been deeply troubled by the recurrence of xenophobic attacks in our country. The brutishness of hurting or killing another person for no other reason than the title on their passport causes us the same pain as apartheid did. It is no different from hurting someone because of the texture of their hair or the colour of their skin. What further sharpens the hurt in this current violence is that it is particularly aimed at fellow Africans – many from countries without whose support, an anti-apartheid struggle would not have been possible.

We remain in a time in South Africa where poor people have legitimate reason to be unsettled about their living conditions. We must acknowledge that there is much work yet to be done to extend the reach of social justice so that it can be felt by the most marginal of our society. But this is not license to kill the 'other'. The relationship between violence and poverty are not obvious and there is no human community that is 'naturally' violent. We have to abide by the first principle of what it means to be human: that each person, as individual and as member of a community, deserves the right to a dignified life. It is when we do not agree to this first principle that Truth comes to rest in the trigger finger and Power becomes the only possible logic.

As we engage with each other in all of our social institutions, we must all strengthen our resolve to resist such sectarian and brute responses to the problems of our society. These xenophobic attacks diminish all of us and Sol Plaatje University wishes to add its voice to the call for the attacks to cease.

Prof Yunus Ballim  
Vice-Chancellor and Principal  
Sol Plaatje University  
Private Bag X5008, Kimberley, 8300  
Tel: +27 53 807 5300