

## **Statement from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Vice-Chancellor Prof Derrick Swartz:**

Our students, staff and Council are outraged and dismayed at recently reported acts of violence and intimidation of fellow Africans by some members of our community in recent days. It is totally unacceptable and must be acted against in the strongest terms.

We call our security services to arrest not only those attacking foreigners but also those brandishing weapons clearly meant to intimidate others. We all must uphold our Constitutional values of respecting diversity and human rights unconditionally. We call on our sectors of society to speak with one, undivided voice against this appalling spectre of violence and intimidation, and work in engaging and educating our communities about their responsibilities in a free society.

At the same time, we are also calling for the development of a more inclusive economic society in South Africa, to break millions of people out of the grip of structural unemployment, poverty and inequality as we believe that this, at least in part, fuels xenophobia.

Our path of economic development has failed so far to create an inclusive society, and we are sitting on a time-bomb. Fresh solutions for inclusive growth and distribution of the fruits of that growth must be found, and all of us have to work towards this goal with a sense of urgency. Failure to do so will erode the social fabric, and fuel internecine violence and social degradation of our communities. However, we must not accept the economic deprivation as a justification for xenophobia. Violence against someone on the basis of national origin or any other marker of social difference is simply unacceptable.

Staff and students are encouraged to join a student-led march against xenophobia on Thursday. Full details of the march will be shared via various NMMU communication platforms

**Prof Derrick Swartz**  
**Vice-Chancellor**