

UDF/ANC/COSATU PRESS STATEMENT

The on-going carnage in the Transvaal is a clear attempt by sections of the security police and Inkatha to create a chaotic situation with an express intention of taking the country back into the dark days of apartheid repression.

Evidence abounds that indicates the fact that the township's violence which started on July 22 1990 in Sebokeng was pre-meditated, planned and implemented in full view of the security forces.

Since last month, various formations of the MDM and the ANC have been warning in advance the authorities including president De Klerk about impending attacks by Inkatha. It is our view that the authorities deliberately ignored these warnings, because until now they have not acted on our evidence. Instead we have seen the police giving cover to Inkatha impis and in some instances they are implicated as having initiated attacks on those who were defending themselves against Inkatha aggression.

It is sad to note that we have not reached a post-apartheid society, and yet we are confronted by a spectre of banditry reminiscent of Renamo in Mozambique. The Impis are busy attacking children, women and defenceless civilians indiscriminately.

The fact that tribal chavaunism is used to fuel this conflict proves beyond doubt that these people are not interested in a future non-racial society. There are attempts to create the impression that the oppressed are divided along tribal lines, between zulu and non-zulu and Hostel dwellers and township residents. This is despite the fact that recent survey in the Star newspaper showed that Inkatha only had 2% black support outside Natal and the ANC and its allies have 84% support, including the vast majority of zulu speaking people.

There are three forces that, for their own reasons, are bent on scuttling the current peace initiative between the government and the ANC. These are : the right wing, elements within Inkatha and some sections of the security forces. The failure of the government to take strong action against these forces puts the peace process under heavy stress and may plunge the country into more chaos.

We are therefore calling on the police to disarm everyone. The so-called traditional weapons have claimed more than enough lives. This is an excuse to leave Inkatha's aggression unchecked.

The ANC's initiative to end violence by establishing peace forums should be supported and strengthened. Our people should form democratic hostel committees to resist forces of division. In the medium term, the hostel system must be abolished and proper family houses build for all people.

Our organisations will be meeting early next week to consider protest actions against Inkatha and the police violence against our people