



22 August 2008

CoRMSA WELCOMES CONSTITUTIONAL COURT ORDER ON THE CLOSURE OF THE TEMPORARY SHELTERS FOR VICTIMS OF XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS

The Constitutional Court yesterday ordered that the shelters remain open until the end of September 2008. CoRMSA welcomes this decision to promote the peaceful and dignified reintegration of displaced migrants into South African communities. By insisting that the camps remain open until the end of September, the Courts have reconfirmed South Africa's commitments to protecting the rights of all who live in the country. This is not only a victory for the thousands who remain in the camps, wary of returning to communities that chased them away only a few months ago. It is also a step forward, a chance for greater collaboration between Government and civil society. Perhaps most importantly, it reflects a recognition that non-nationals are an integral and permanent part of our social fabric. The court decision does not grant them special protections or privileges. Rather, it recognises that by ensuring their rights and security, we can help create a safer and more equitable society, the kind of South Africa in which we all hope to live.

CoRMSA welcomes the opportunity to work with government and many civil society organizations, including citizens, migrants, and refugees to address the immediate needs of those in the camps while helping to improve conditions for all. Migrants have and always will be part of South African society. We applaud the court's recognition that as our neighbours they deserve the protection and dignity we wish for ourselves.

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