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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **CoRMSA welcomes the apology by Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs on xenophobic comments**

**JOHANNESBURG** – CoRMSA and its partners welcome the apology by the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs, Ms Maggie Maunye as quoted in media reports today.

Her xenophobic comments were made after a briefing by a delegation of the Department of Home Affairs to the Portfolio Committee. Ms Maunye's comments on Wednesday last week suggested that foreign nationals coming to South Africa are using up the country's resources and prevent citizens from enjoying their freedom.

"We were deeply concerned by the ill-informed and inflammatory comments that were made by Maggie Maunye on foreign nationals. At a time when South Africa is working hard to uphold the values of the Constitution, such comments would not be expected from a Senior Parliamentarian whose first responsibility is to uphold the Constitution and to protect the rights of all within South African borders," said Sicel'mpilo Shange-Buthane, the Executive Director of the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA). "The South African constitution is seen as one of the best on the continent and in a young democracy like ours, it is regrettable to hear a portfolio committee member questioning human rights laws and the country's Constitution labelling them 'an excuse to accommodate foreigners'" Shange-Buthane continued.

It is three years now since unprecedented violence against non-nationals swept through South Africa. Recently, violence against foreign-owned shops was witnessed in several parts of the country, including Katlehong, Kagiso, Ramaphosa, Freedom Park, Diepsloot, Orlando East in Soweto and Port Elizabeth and this has resulted in the death of several foreigners over the last year. There are currently tensions in various communities across the country and Ms Maunye's statements could have added fuel to an already tense situation.

CoRMSA and partners call for renewed efforts to ensure that work being done by various government departments to address xenophobia and other intolerances is

coordinated and these are shared with all concerned while making sure that communities are part of these deliberations. We also appeal to political leaders to lead by example and refrain from making xenophobic remarks.

**For more information please contact:**

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