



Striving for stability and prosperity of Congo

Forum of Congolese Organisations in South Africa

Reg. No.: 063-482



Agir pour la stabilité et la prospérité du Congo

STATEMENT ON THE POLICE RAID TOWARDS CONGOLESE COMMUNITY IN YEOVILLE 19/01/2012

1. On Thursday 19, 2012 around 4pm, hundreds of Congolese nationals living mainly in Yeoville were beaten and arrested by the South Africa Police;
2. The situation created panic and fear within the community;
3. Leaders of Congolese NGOs, Churches and youth approached some South African Police officials to find out more about it;
4. These officials were very cooperative and supportive;
5. According to Senior Superintendent Mpe Lobisi Mataung, in charge of the Yeoville Police, after eight (8) years in this station, he never had any problem with the Congolese community before but the problem started with the last elections held in the DR Congo;
He mentioned amongst other roots of problem lack of dialogue between KABILA and TSHISEKEDI supporters, ignorance of South African laws and intolerance leading to some criminal behaviors (public violence, kidnapping, vandalism, etc from both sides);
6. He was very concerned because of the disturbance created in this peaceful community;
7. This is the fourth time that the Police is improperly using force against Congolese community living in this area;
8. The same concerns were shared by Police officers in Hillbrow Police Station and the Independent Complaints Directorate;
9. After the release of women on the same day, 133 Congolese men remained in custody until Friday 20/01/2012;
10. The police has released 112 and maintained 21 Congolese as suspects for varied offenses during that electoral period;
11. To be beat, arrest or release the police was relying on certain Fabrice Zombi, who is the Chair of an organization called "Friends of KABILA". He was accompanied by some of his members who were recording how the police was humiliating his fellow Congolese;
12. Many arrested sustained injuries; a case of one admitted in Johannesburg Hospital for a serious injury was mentioned to us.

13. Arrests were done everywhere, in shops, bars, Restaurants, churches, Internet cafés, on the streets, in people's accommodations, etc. causing a public chaos.

Considering all above:

1. We acknowledge that the issue is very sensitive and therefore affirm the importance of respectful and constructive dialogue within Congolese community;
2. We welcome the positive approach of the South Africa Police officers on the dialogue with members of Congolese community in order to address in this kind of issues;
3. Firmly convinced that no one should face violence, abuse on any ground, we call on the Independent Complaints Directorate to investigate complaints of criminality and misconduct against members of the South African Police Service in connection with the said raid;
4. We encourage the South Africa Human Rights Commission and other human rights organizations to ensure that without any intimidation the Congolese in South Africa can enjoy their rights of expression, of association and assembly, as well as their right to freedom and security;

The statement is endorsed by the following organizations and individuals:

- **FORUM OF CONGOLESE ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA**
- **COSORTIUM FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN SOUTH AFRICA**
- **CHRISTIANS FOR PEACE IN AFRICA**
- **AFRICA AWAKE**
- **AFRICAN MIGRANTS SOLIDARITY**
- **CONGO HEART OF AFRICA**
- **UMBRELLA**
- **CENTRE FOR RIGHTS, LOVE AND LAW**
- **BOURSE OKAPI**