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## Anger at S Africa camp closures

**Medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) has sharply criticised the forced closure of South African migrant camps over the last two days.**

"There is no solution for these people, they have nowhere to go," an MSF spokesman told the BBC.

The camps, holding 1,200 foreigners driven from their homes by May's xenophobic violence, are being shut around the city of Johannesburg.

This is despite a ruling from the Constitutional Court to keep them open

Last month, it ruled a full hearing should decide if it was legal to shut them.

The provincial government in Gauteng argues it is now safe for the foreigners to return to their homes.

The camps were set up following attacks in which 62 people were killed and thousands displaced.

The camps that are being closed are those at Glenanda, on Rifle Range road, south of Johannesburg and Boksburg, east of the city and a third at Rand airport.

According to MSF, which has been working in the camps, around 1,200 people have been forced out.

"We are very worried," Alexis Moens, project co-ordinator for MSF told the BBC. "When people go back to their homes they have been attacked," he said.

### **Leaving 'under duress'**

A spokesman for the Gauteng provincial government, Simon Zwane said, "We have closed Glenanda... everybody moved out of there."

Mr Zwane said the process of giving financial assistance to the refugees was under way.

The Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (Cormsa) says the move is illegal, in terms of the Constitutional Court order.

Duncan Breem of Cormsa said that the refugees had given sums from 500 rand (\$60) donated by humanitarian organisations and some food and told to go.

"They took it under duress," he said.

The violence - which caused the worst bloodshed in South Africa since the end of apartheid in

1994 - began in a township north of Johannesburg before spreading to other parts of the country.

Those attacked were blamed for fuelling high unemployment and crime.

Twenty-one South Africans, mistaken by gangs for foreigners, were among those killed.

The United Nations says that around 80,000 were driven from their homes during May.

Some had returned to their countries of origin. Others sought refuge in temporary camps, which the government said have to close by 4 October.

But others put the numbers of those displaced much higher.

This is because some of the foreigners were given shelter by their neighbours and never went into the camps.

Cormsa puts the number of displaced at 100,000.

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<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/7645935.stm>

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