

Return to: [Previous Page](#)

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## S African Rts Body To Probe Anti-immigrant Violence -Official

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JOHANNESBURG (AFP)--The South African human rights body Monday said it would soon begin to investigate the origins of anti-immigrant violence which claimed more than 60 lives in May.

"We want to investigate the root causes of the violence through a multi- faceted approach," spokesman of the government-backed South African Human Rights Commission Vincent Moaga told AFP.

"We got a formal request last week to investigate that violence. We should be able to do that early next year. There is a need to find answers to the issues raised in the aftermath of the attacks," he said.

He was responding to a call made on Monday by the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, or Cormsa, for a "serious public high-level inquiry into the attacks and responses to them."

"To prevent a reoccurrence of the violence, it is necessary to identify and address the root causes," Cormsa said in a statement.

Cormsa, a coalition of several rights bodies, had after the violence led a legal battle to ensure that shelters created for displaced immigrants following the attacks in the country's richest province Gauteng were kept open until a proper reintegration plan was drawn up.

The tented shelters were set up after at least 62 people were killed in anti- foreigner attacks in May that spread to various parts of the country from Johannesburg in the Gauteng province.

The camps were dismantled about three months ago.

Cormsa accused local leaders of being "actively involved" in fueling the violence.

"Unless these leaders are held accountable, they will continue to base their campaigns and positions on an agenda of hate and violence...their involvement in strategies to address xenophobia is of grave concern," it said.

Police spokesman Eugene Opperman told AFP cases of dozens of suspects arrested over the violence and charged with various offenses, including murder, were yet to make it to court.

(END) Dow Jones Newswires

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Return to: [Previous Page](#)