

## - Media Release -

For Immediate Release



**Business Against Crime  
South Africa**

### **Business Against Crime South Africa Statement on Xenophobic Attacks in South Africa**

**20 May 2008, Johannesburg** –Business Against Crime South Africa strongly condemns the xenophobic attacks which have been characterised by heinous violence and criminality in various parts of the country. The SAPS is to be commended for its work in seeking to quell the violent attacks flaring up in Alexandra, the Johannesburg CBD, Cleveland, Hillbrow, Diepsloot, Tembisa and other parts of the country. Police stations are having to cope with large numbers of displaced persons, both South African nationals and foreigners, seeking protection from violent mobs who reportedly claim that foreigners have stolen their jobs. “This national, humanitarian crisis has been developing for years as a direct consequence of the unmonitored influx of undocumented foreigners into the country and their impact on the infrastructure, social services, housing, education and employment. Criminal elements are fuelling the underlying xenophobic tensions arising from the competition for scarce resources, to foster anarchy and use the instability to rape, murder and enrich themselves by looting shops and homes,” says Sipiwe Nzimande, CEO of Business Against Crime South Africa. The number of undocumented foreigners currently residing within the country is unknown. Estimates of Zimbabweans for instance range between 1 and 4 million in largely urban areas, competing for scarce resources with members of our society. Faced with poor service delivery, rising food and oil prices and a shortage of employment and housing opportunities, many South Africans are easily, but incorrectly, persuaded that immigrants are largely to blame. “Regardless of the causes or a misguided rationale, we cannot condone illegal behaviour. The criminals must be found and punished. The level of brutality of the attacks has left the country as a whole in shame,” says Nzimande. A coherent policy to manage illegal immigration is a however an urgent necessity. South Africa is unique in the extent to which it allows undocumented foreigners to integrate into society, and live side by side with its citizens. What is required, Nzimande says, is:

- More effective control of national borders and ports of entry;
- Proper documentation for all foreigners, which includes fingerprinting, photos and residential address records;
- Responsibility for border control allocated to one single agency;
- More stringent compliance by employers in hiring documented persons and, where applicable, paying the regulated wage rate.

“The contempt for law and order demonstrated by the events of recent days proves that the strengthening of the Criminal Justice System - the plan for which was approved by Cabinet in 2007 – should not be delayed any further. The current system is not an effective deterrent to crime”.

**Ends...**

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