



ON CHE GUEVARA ROAD

REFUGEES ON THE FRONT LINE
AGAINST FASCISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

CONTENTS

	Introduction	2
	Bishop Raphael Bahebwa	
01	19 MAY 2026 Refugees and Migrants Seeking Protection Left Without Shelter in Durban	4
02	21 MAY 2026 Crisis in Durban	6
03	21 JUNE 2026 Refugees on Che Guevara Road Reject Deportation and Call for Protection	10
04	2 SEPTEMBER 2026 Durban Refugee Crisis Continues as We Starve, Die and Face a Pincer Attack from the State and March and March	13
05	9 SEPTEMBER 2026 March and March Plan to Attack Refugees Again on Thursday	16
06	11 SEPTEMBER 2026 Respectful Call for Greater Media Accuracy in Reporting the Refugee Crisis in Durban	19
07	15 SEPTEMBER 2026 More than 200 Refugees Now Sheltering in Stella Park	22

INTRODUCTION

South Africa has a long history of xenophobic violence. The pogroms of 2008 and 2015 are the best known, but the violence did not end with them. Over the last two years it has taken a more organised and more openly political form.

March and March was formed in Durban in early 2025 under the leadership of Jacinta Ngobese-Zuma. It presented itself as a citizens' organisation that only wanted the migration law enforced. In practice it made no distinction between documented and undocumented people. With the uMkhonto weSizwe Party (MKP), ActionSA and others, it led marches that included armed men, and the police did not act against the weapons. A 'deadline' was announced for migrants to leave the country by 30 June 2026. As that date came closer, local groups went from neighbourhood to neighbourhood threatening and assaulting people and driving them from their homes. Many had their homes, property and businesses seized. Thousands were displaced across KwaZulu-Natal.

On 18 May hundreds of us who had been driven from our homes went to Refugee Social Services and then to Durban Central Police Station to ask for protection. We were promised shelter, but when we were taken to the shelters we were turned away and chased off, and we slept on the pavement outside the police station. The next day the police attacked us with batons, tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets. We went to the Diakonia Centre, where supporters of March and March and the MKP tried to attack us. The state's answer was to 'verify' our papers. Around 400 of us were taken to the Refugee Reception Centre on Che Guevara Road, where all but two were found to have valid documents. From 22 May we lived on the road outside the Home Affairs offices.

The government gave us two choices. We could go back to the communities from which we had been driven out, or we could be taken to the Lin-

dela Repatriation Centre, the notorious migrant prison, to face deportation to the countries from which we fled. We lived on the road through the winter, in the rain and often without food. Two of us died there, among them Bienvenue Munga, who could not keep to his TB treatment without food. In September March and March, with ActionSA and the MKP, attacked us twice on the road, arriving armed and escorted by the police. On 15 September about half of us boarded buses to Lindela. More than 200 refused and moved to Stella Park, from where we scattered, often into desperate circumstances.

We were refugees from seven countries, and we were all in South Africa legally. The statements that follow were issued as these events unfolded, between 19 May and 15 September 2026. They are published here as they were issued, in the order in which they were written, so that there is a record in our own words of what was done to us and of who stood with us.

Bishop Raphael Bahebwa
Durban, September 2026

01

19 MAY 2026 · CONGOLESE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN PRESS STATEMENT

Refugees and Migrants Seeking Protection Left Without Shelter in Durban

The Congolese Solidarity Campaign expresses deep concern over the situation facing refugees and migrants in Durban who are currently living in fear for their safety and without adequate protection or shelter. The situation in Durban is extremely dangerous.

On the morning of 18 May 2026, refugees and migrants approached the Refugee Social Services (RSS) office at the Diakonia Centre in Durban to seek protection and urgent assistance. Community members explained that they feared for their lives and requested intervention. However, they were informed that RSS could not guarantee protection against threats from local South Africans and were advised to seek assistance from the South African Police Service.

At approximately 11am, refugees and migrants arrived at Durban Central Police Station, where community leaders held meetings with police officers throughout the day. At around 4pm, Metro Police official Naicker and Colonel Sithole from Durban Central SAPS informed the group that men would be accommodated at the tented site near the Elangeni Hotel on North Beach, while women would be taken to the shelter site on Mansel Road.

At approximately 5.45pm, refugees and migrants were escorted to these sites by Metro Police and SAPS officers. However, upon arrival, both men and women were refused accommodation. People already staying at the

sites stated that there was no space for additional occupants, while security personnel indicated that they had not been informed that new people would be arriving.

At the Mansel Road site, tensions escalated and women seeking shelter were chased away by some local occupants. One woman's blouse was torn during the confrontation, which took place in the presence of police officers.

By approximately 6.30pm, the men were instructed to return to Durban Central Police Station. The women returned later, at around 7pm, after being unable to access shelter safely.

As a result, all the refugees and migrants seeking protection were forced to sleep on the pavement and parking area outside Durban Central Police Station overnight.

Police leadership reportedly assured the group that an alternative arrangement would be discussed on 19 May 2026. At the time of issuing this statement, those affected remain in urgent need of safety, shelter, and humanitarian support.

The Congolese Solidarity Campaign calls on the relevant authorities, humanitarian organisations, and civil society structures to urgently intervene to ensure the safety, dignity, and protection of all refugees and migrants affected by this situation.

We also express our respect and gratitude to the progressive organisations, intellectuals and lawyers in South Africa who have shown solidarity with refugees and migrants during this difficult time, including Abahlali baseMjondolo, the South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU), the General Industries Workers Union of South Africa (GIWUSA), the Socio-Economic Rights Institute (SERI), and others who continue to stand for human dignity and justice in these difficult and dangerous times.

Bishop Raphael Bahebwa

President, Congolese Solidarity Campaign

Crisis in Durban

The Congolese Solidarity Campaign, and other migrant groups and progressive forces in Durban, are deeply concerned over the situation facing refugees and migrants in Durban who are currently living in fear for their safety and without adequate protection or shelter. The situation in Durban is extremely dangerous.

As xenophobic rhetoric and street thuggery – carried out with impunity – have escalated in Durban, and in smaller towns in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, refugees have been forced from their homes and had their businesses shut down. A number of people have been assaulted, and many have been threatened and instructed not to go to work or take their children to school. The police systematically refuse to open cases.

At the same time many now find themselves undocumented as Home Affairs has failed to renew their papers on time.

On the morning of 18 May 2026, refugees who are no longer safe in the neighbourhoods where they are living in Durban, or have been forced out of small towns like Estcourt, approached the Refugee Social Services office in Durban to seek protection and urgent assistance. Community members explained that they feared for their lives and requested the protection of the police. However, they were informed that the police could not guarantee protection against threats from the xenophobic groups and were advised to seek assistance from the South African Police Service (SAPS).

At approximately 11am, refugees and migrants arrived at Durban Central Police Station, where community leaders held meetings with police

officers throughout the day. At around 4pm, Metro Police official Naicker and Colonel Sithole from the Durban Central SAPS informed the group that men would be accommodated at the tented site near the Elangeni Hotel on North Beach, while women would be taken to the shelter site on Mansel Road.

At approximately 5.45pm, refugees and migrants were escorted to these sites by Metro Police and SAPS officers. However, upon arrival, both men and women were refused accommodation. People already staying at the sites stated that there was no space for additional occupants, while security personnel indicated that they had not been informed that new people would be arriving.

At the Mansel Road site, tensions escalated and women seeking shelter were chased away. One woman's blouse was torn during the confrontation, which took place in the presence of police officers who did not intervene.

By approximately 6.30pm, the men were instructed to return to Durban Central Police Station. The women returned later, at around 7pm, after being unable to access shelter safely.

As a result, all the refugees and migrants seeking protection were forced to sleep on the pavement and parking area outside Durban Central Police Station overnight.

The following day, 19 May 2026, police used batons, tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets against the unarmed and peaceful people gathered outside the police station. There are multiple reports that live ammunition was used. There is video evidence to confirm that a number of people were seriously injured. The police attempted to arrest Bishop Raphael Bahebwa, President of the Congolese Solidarity Campaign, but he was protected by the people. The police said that unarmed peaceful people were 'causing chaos' and some of the media reported this as fact.

The group then moved about four kilometres away to the Diakonia Centre, a church building where Abahlali baseMjondolo has its offices. Upon arrival, community leaders were called into a meeting with church leaders, the local councillor, human rights lawyers, and representatives from Refugee Social Services. The central question discussed in the meeting was

what steps would be taken to ensure the safety and protection of the people affected.

During the meeting, the local councillor stated that the people would need to vacate the area, and requested that the leaders prepare a memorandum outlining the demands and concerns of the community. However, the meeting ended without any concrete solution being reached. The people indicated that they would remain and sleep outside for a second night.

On the morning of 20 May 2026, another meeting was held at the Abahlali baseMjondolo office. This meeting included representatives of Abahlali baseMjondolo, human rights lawyers, Refugee Social Services, and refugee leaders from different countries. The outcome of the meeting was that all possible actions would be taken to ensure the safety of the refugees.

A later meeting was then held with representatives from the Department of Home Affairs, senior police officials, other stakeholders, and refugee leaders. The outcome of this meeting was that the police and Home Affairs wanted all refugees to undergo a verification process at the Refugee Reception Centre on Moore Road in Durban at 10am on 21 May 2026. The problem with this is that many people have been made undocumented by the failure of Home Affairs to renew their papers.

Some people had not eaten for two days and today Gift of the Givers arrived at the Diakonia Centre with food, which is much appreciated. Today around three buses of people were taken to Home Affairs for verification. Others are too frightened to go. The local councillor insists that the refugees must leave the area by tonight but they have nowhere to go.

The uMkhonto weSizwe Party (MKP) and March and March are outside and have tried on a number of occasions to enter and attack us. The police are pushing them out but they did manage to enter on one occasion and assaulted two people.

The situation is chaotic and we cannot give an accurate number of people. However, it is not less than 500.

The Congolese Solidarity Campaign calls on the relevant authorities, humanitarian organisations, and progressive organisations to urgently intervene to ensure the safety, dignity, and protection of all refugees and mi-

grants affected by this situation. People urgently need safe accommodation, food and psychological support.

We also express our respect and gratitude to the progressive organisations, intellectuals, lawyers, and movements in South Africa that have shown solidarity with refugees and migrants during this difficult time, including Abahlali baseMjondolo, the South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU), the General Industries Workers Union of South Africa (GIWUSA), the Socio-Economic Rights Institute (SERI), and others who continue to stand for human dignity and justice in these difficult and dangerous times.

We also need to note that the statement issued by the police this morning that said that our organisation had organised people to approach the police station seeking protection is not correct. The group of people seeking protection included people from Rwanda and Burundi, as well as the Democratic Republic of Congo. Members of our organisation were there in our individual capacities.

Bishop Raphael Bahebwa

President, Congolese Solidarity Campaign

Shomari Mukandjwa

Secretary and spokesperson, Congolese Solidarity Campaign

Refugees on Che Guevara Road Reject Deportation and Call for Protection

In recent weeks many thousands of people, including migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, have been forced from their homes, businesses and communities across KwaZulu-Natal. Many have had their homes, property and businesses seized or expropriated by xenophobic groups acting with impunity. Thousands of people have been displaced across the province and many continue to live in fear.

More than five weeks ago hundreds of documented refugees sought protection from the police after being driven from their homes and communities by threats, violence and intimidation. Instead of receiving protection they were left without shelter and hundreds were forced to sleep outside Durban Central Police Station.

On 19 May police used batons, tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets against unarmed refugees seeking protection. The refugees later sought refuge at the Diakonia Centre, where supporters of March and March and the uMkhonto weSizwe Party repeatedly attempted to attack them.

Approximately 400 refugees were subsequently taken to the Home Affairs Refugee Reception Centre on Che Guevara Road, where all but two were found to have currently valid documentation. One was able to quickly secure currently valid documentation via the court. The other person was taken to Lindela pending deportation. Since then hundreds of refugees, including many children, have been sleeping outside the Home Affairs of-

fices while thousands of other displaced people remain in halls and temporary accommodation across KwaZulu-Natal.

On 15 June the police threatened us, telling us that we must leave Che Guevara.

Despite continuing threats and repeated warnings that the situation is deteriorating, no effective steps have been taken to guarantee the safety of refugees, restore people to their homes, or act against those responsible for xenophobic intimidation, violence and the destruction of livelihoods.

Government officials and politicians have repeatedly informed us that we must either return to the communities from which we were driven by threats, violence and intimidation, or accept being taken to the Lindela Repatriation Centre, from where we face deportation to countries from which many of us fled and from which we are legally protected as recognised refugees.

Neither of these options is acceptable.

We cannot return to communities where xenophobic organisations and local mobs continue to operate with impunity and where people who have attempted to return have been threatened, assaulted and forced to flee again. We will not agree to be taken to Lindela – a notorious, corrupt and brutal migrant prison – and forcibly removed to countries from which we sought refuge and in which many of us continue to face acute danger.

Both of the options given to us by the government are in clear violation of international refugee law, fundamental human rights principles and South Africa's legal obligations to refugees and asylum seekers. The principle of non-refoulement prohibits the return of refugees to countries where they may face persecution, violence or serious harm.

The state has a duty to protect refugees, asylum seekers and migrants from xenophobic violence, intimidation and displacement. The responsibility of the state is to act against the organisations, politicians and local mobs that have driven people from their homes and destroyed their livelihoods, not to punish the victims of xenophobic violence.

The refugees on Che Guevara Road remain fearful and uncertain about their future. Many have lost their homes, businesses and livelihoods. Many

have no income and no safe place to go. There remains an urgent need for food, drinking water, warm clothes, medicine and other basic necessities.

We again call on the government to fulfil its constitutional and international obligations, guarantee the safety of refugees and migrants, act decisively against xenophobic organisations and local mobs, and provide meaningful social support to people who have lost their homes and livelihoods.

We also call on progressive organisations, churches, trade unions and all people committed to human dignity and human rights to continue standing in solidarity with refugees and migrants during this crisis.

We have been failed by the South African government and it is now vital that the United Nations and international human rights organisations must intervene.

Bishop Raphael Bahebwa

Kado Muhato

04

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

Durban Refugee Crisis Continues as We Starve, Die and Face a Pincer Attack from the State and March and March

Hundreds of documented refugees have been living out in the open on Che Guevara Road – also sometimes referred to by its old name of Moore Road – for more than three months after being forced from their homes by fascist mobs acting with state support.

We initially sought sanctuary from the police, who attacked us. The response of the state was not to ensure our safety but to check our papers – something they call ‘verification’. After we were ‘verified’ we were promised safe accommodation. That promise has never been kept and we have been living on Che Guevara Road since 22 May. We suffered repeated threats and attempts at attack from March and March and the uMkhonto weSizwe Party.

At the beginning we were 500 but over the months some have fled to safer parts of the country and we are now 350. The state has not provided us with shelter, security to return to the areas from which we were expelled by the fascist mobs or even water, food, sanitary pads, medication, blankets, etc. We have been kept alive by NGOs and comrades who have provided food. The state has put intense pressure on the people supporting us with food saying that if we don’t have food we will go away. We went from having three meals a day, to two and then one and now we can go for two or three days without any food. We have been on the street through winter,

and in the rain. Many of us are seriously ill. Those of us who are on chronic medication that must be taken with food have not been able to stick to our treatment plans.

On Monday morning when the sun came up, one of our comrades, Bi-venue Munga, had passed away. He had not been able to stick to his TB treatment plan due to lack of food. He is the second person to pass away.

For months the state has been trying to force us to the notorious Lindela Repatriation Centre, the violent and corrupt prison where people are taken before being deported. We are all documented refugees and it is a crime against international law to deport documented refugees. For months the United Nations told us that we should not accept being forced to Lindela and that the state should ensure our safety in South Africa. They are now telling us that there are no other options. In these desperate circumstances 105 of us have accepted that they have no other option than to go to Lindela. The rest of us will remain as we cannot go back to our countries of origin from which we fled as refugees nor can we go back to the communities from which we were expelled by fascist mobs. We are remaining with a clear demand that the state must keep its promise to ensure that we have safe places to live.

March and March has announced that tomorrow – 3 September – they will launch a ‘clean-up’ operation on Che Guevara Road. The message circulated with their poster says:

Sanibonani baholi nansi Clean up ebheke ku Moore Road esigcemeni sabokufika asebehlale eside isikhathi phambi kwa Home Affairs indawo esingcole ngendlela eyisimanga angisayiphathi aka Pavement osuphenduke Refugee Camp asiphelele khona sonke baholi plz share as much as u can

This means:

Greetings, leaders. Here is a clean-up planned for Moore Road, in the area where foreigners have been staying for a long time in front of Home Affairs. The place has become unbelievably dirty, not to mention the pavement, which has turned into a refugee camp. Let us all be there, leaders. Please share this as widely as you can.

March and March has consistently acted with state support, sometimes active and sometimes passive. We do not know what will happen tomorrow.

We are making an urgent call for solidarity from all progressive forces.

Bishop Raphael Bahebwa

Kafuti Muyumba

March and March Plan to Attack Refugees Again on Thursday

Last Thursday March and March attacked us – all documented refugees – who have been forced to live on Che Guevara Road since 22 May. We spent the whole winter living outside on the road after being forced from our homes and having our businesses seized or destroyed by fascist mobs. Two of us have died on the road. We were initially promised temporary shelter at North Beach next to the Elangeni tent and others at Mansel Road but when we arrived at the temporary shelter we were driven out by the fascist mobs. We then went to the Durban Central Police Station seeking protection from the police. They brutally attacked us.

Since we were displaced from our homes March and March, accompanied by the uMkhonto weSizwe Party, have repeatedly tried to attack us. Last Thursday they came to Che Guevara Road, armed as they always are, and accompanied by the police. When they arrived the police tried to keep a line between them and us but they pushed the police out of the way and attacked us. After they attacked us the police intervened with stun grenades, etc. March and March should never have been allowed to gather and proceed to Che Guevara Road while openly carrying weapons. The police should never have allowed them to come so close to us. They should have been kept at least 200 metres away from us.

Now March and March say that they will return to Che Guevara Road tomorrow for another ‘clean-up operation’. Unless the state acts to stop them

they will arrive with weapons and they will attack us again. They are also demanding that we be deported and the 'legal arm' that they have set up after their meeting with AfriForum says that it will take legal action to ensure that we are deported. This will never happen. It would be a gross violation of international and national law to deport documented refugees.

The state continues to demand that we either return to the communities from which we were violently expelled or be taken to Lindela, the migrant detention centre. Some of us have agreed to accept being taken to Lindela, something that the government has pushed and the UNHCR has agreed to.

The premier says that we must be assisted to 'go back home'. We are refugees and cannot go back to the countries from which we fled due to wars. We cannot go back to the communities from which we were expelled as we will come under attack again. March and March say that they will mobilise every Thursday until the election in November, which means that until November we will not be safe.

What those of us who do not want to go to Lindela are asking for is safe, temporary accommodation and a clear commitment from government to act against the forces that have attacked us and plan to do so again. If the attacks stop after the election then it may be possible for us to return to living in the communities from which we were displaced or find other communities where we can live.

The government must instruct the police to:

1. Ensure that March and March are prevented from gathering and marching with weapons.
2. Ensure that March and March are kept at least 200 metres away from us at all times.

The government also needs to make it very clear to everyone that we are all documented refugees who are in the country legally and that it is the people who have attacked us, driven us from our homes and destroyed or seized our businesses who are breaking the law and that the demand that we be forcibly 'repatriated' is a demand that is in violation of the law.

We are also calling on the media to please ensure that we are also inter-

viewed and that it is not only March and March that are granted the right to speak, that we are allowed to clearly explain our situation, that it is made clear that we are legally in South Africa and that it is the demand by March and March that we be deported that is illegal, that it is illegal for March and March to carry weapons and that March and March have repeatedly attacked us. We are also calling on the media to refrain from uncritically using the language of March and March by, for example, calling an attack on us a 'clean-up operation'. Finally, it is important that the media stop saying that all the refugees who have been living on Che Guevara Road are Congolese. We are refugees from seven different countries.

We are in a desperate situation and are calling for all progressive forces, all human rights organisations and monitors, all people of good conscience and all Muslim and Christian leaders to be with us on Thursday and to form a human chain around us. We are appealing directly to the South African Council of Churches to mobilise their affiliates to protect us.

Bishop Raphael Bahebwa

Kafuti Muyumba

Respectful Call for Greater Media Accuracy in Reporting the Refugee Crisis in Durban

Yesterday March and March, accompanied as always by ActionSA and the uMkhonto weSizwe Party (MKP), returned to Che Guevara Road where hundreds of documented refugees have been living since 22 May. Once again, they were escorted by the police and arrived carrying weapons. Once again, we were attacked.

We are deeply grateful to the comrades who came and stood with us in solidarity, and we appreciate the media houses that spoke to us rather than only getting comment from March and March and the government. As more media houses are speaking to the displaced refugees the story being told to the world is slowly becoming more accurate. It is now generally understood that we are all documented refugees who were driven from our homes by xenophobic mobs. It is now also starting to be understood that we come from seven countries, and not just the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is also starting to be understood that in May we were promised safe temporary shelter but that this promise was never kept.

However, there is more work that needs to be done to ensure fair and accurate reporting on the crisis. There is often a problem with how organised violence against refugees is reported. When we were attacked by March and March along with ActionSA and MKP on Thursday last week March and March announced their intention to attack us in advance and used the fascist language of a 'clean-up' operation. They were allowed to

gather and march while openly armed and were then escorted to us by the South African Police Service (SAPS) and allowed to attack us. We were physically assaulted and had personal belongings stolen and destroyed. Two children suffered injuries requiring medical attention, while two adults sustained severe head injuries and had to be hospitalised. Siyafana Sonke Action Campaign activists who were present to monitor the situation were subjected to intimidation as well as verbal, racial and physical abuse. The attack was stopped by the eThekweni Metro Police for which we are grateful.

We have already expressed our concern at the way in which some media houses reported on this using March and March's language of a 'clean-up operation' to describe a premeditated, armed, and violent attack. But we are also concerned at the way in which much reporting disguises the fact that March and March attacked us by making it seem that violence just 'erupted' out of nowhere. When headlines include statements such as 'tensions flare', 'violence erupted', 'tensions rise', 'descended into violence' or 'refugee camp clash' the fact that one group of people attacked another group is hidden. This is exactly what we have seen in much of the Western reporting on Palestine. Accurate headlines should have made it clear that March and March attacked a group of displaced refugees.

We are also concerned that much reporting continues to present March and March as an organisation that is concerned with 'illegal immigration'. After yesterday's attack the Mail & Guardian, EWN, Business Day, SABC, IOL and YFM, along with others, all referred to 'anti-illegal immigration protestors' or used very similar descriptions. We are all documented refugees and therefore the people attacking us and demanding that we be deported are not acting against 'illegal immigrants', they are acting against people that have a full legal right to be in South Africa. They should therefore be accurately described as a 'xenophobic group' or 'xenophobic hate group'.

We are also very concerned that some reporting has simply accepted statements by the mayor and other government officials claiming that we have all accepted the pressure to be taken to the Lindela Repatriation Cen-

tre. For instance, an article published by News24 yesterday is headlined 'Refugees agree to move to Lindela after more than 3 months on streets of Durban'. This is just not correct.

As we have explained in previous statements around 105 to 110 of us have, due to the desperate circumstances on the street, including the ongoing risk of violence, agreed to go to Lindela. But the majority of us, more than 250, have refused to go to Lindela, a place that is effectively a prison and is notorious for human rights abuses. We wish to be able to continue with our lives in peace and safety. Each person and each family has to make their own decision in this very difficult situation but the media must report accurately. The facts are that while some of us have accepted the pressure to go to Lindela others have decided to refuse to accept that pressure. We humbly request that the media make sure to report this and other matters accurately.

We would like to take this opportunity to repeat our demand, which is within the law, that March and March not be allowed to gather and march with weapons and that they be always kept at a safe distance of at least 200m from us.

Bishop Raphael Bahebwa

Kafuti Muyumba

More than 200 Refugees Now Sheltering in Stella Park

Today around half of the refugees who had been living on Che Guevara Road since 22 May boarded buses to travel to Lindela, the notorious prison used to hold undocumented migrants prior to deportation. They have been given no clarity at all on what their future will now hold, or on what, if any, plans the government has for them.

The rest, more than 200 people, have refused this pressure and did not board the buses. We have been repeatedly attacked by March and March, acting with the support of ActionSA and the uMkhonto weSizwe Party (MKP), and have received repeated threats, some of which we have shared with the media. These threats include a threat to have men from the nearby Dalton Hostel attack us during the night. Along with threats from March and March and anonymous people, we have also been threatened by the government.

Home Affairs KZN Provincial Manager Cyril Mncwabe has told us that if we do not get into the buses to be taken to an uncertain future in Lindela – a place notorious for violence, corruption and various kinds of human rights violations – we will be evicted from the street. This is also, of course, a threat of violence.

Those of us who have refused the pressure to accept being taken to Lindela have now moved to Stella Park. Dangerous weather is forecast and we also do not know what our future holds. Many of us have children, and

many of our children are in local schools – which is one of the reasons why we refused the pressure to be taken to Lindela.

We wish to remind the people of South Africa that we are all documented refugees, that we were forced from our homes by fascist mobs while the police stood by or accompanied the mobs, and that our businesses have been destroyed or looted by March and March, ActionSA and MKP. When we were first driven from our homes, the government promised us temporary emergency accommodation. The fascists drove us away from this accommodation and when we went to the police seeking support they attacked us too.

The government then gave us only two choices: either go back to the communities from which we were violently expelled or go to Lindela. The government refused to make any arrangements to make it possible for us to return to the communities from which we were expelled by ensuring our safety. When March and March attacked us on Che Guevara Road, the police allowed them to carry weapons and accompanied them as they came to attack us.

We fled repression and wars in our countries of origin, were given the status of documented refugees, violently expelled from our homes by fascist mobs, attacked by the police and then repeatedly attacked by fascists on the street where, in desperation, we took refuge. Now some of us are being taken to a notorious migrant prison and others are left sheltering in a park, with both groups deeply fearful of their future.

It is unfortunate that the media continue to misrepresent the situation and to produce stories in which we are not spoken to. For instance, the article just published by News24 falsely says that we are all going to Lindela. This is just not true. It quotes only one person – Ndileka Cola from the Department of Home Affairs. Not one refugee is quoted. Once again, we respectfully request the media to speak to us when they report on us.

We remain deeply grateful to all the principled South African comrades who have stood with us in solidarity through this terrible ordeal.

A government that took human rights seriously would ensure that those of us who remain and are now sheltering in Stella Park are protected from

attack, that measures are taken to give us safe temporary accommodation and that we are then afforded the protection necessary to be able to return to ordinary life.

However, we continue to be people who are not counted as people, people whose humanity is denied, people who can be driven from their homes, insulted and attacked at will, people who can be abandoned by the state and treated like animals or criminals.

Today, we wait to see what will happen to us in the park – if we will be attacked by the police or the fascists, or both, and if we will have to endure dangerous weather. Those of us who are Christians remember the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

Keep us in your prayers.

Bishop Raphael Bahebwa

Kafuti Muyumba

‘We continue to be people who are not counted as people, people whose humanity is denied, people who can be driven from their homes, insulted and attacked at will, people who can be abandoned by the state and treated like animals or criminals.’

REFUGEES ON CHE GUEVARA ROAD · 15 SEPTEMBER 2026

ON CHE GUEVARA ROAD