



UNITED NATIONS

Office of the Resident Coordinator
South Africa

Situation Report 3 – VIOLENCE AGAINST FOREIGNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA – 3 JUNE 2008

HIGHLIGHTS

- Declaration of a disaster is made in Gauteng Province, enabling the provincial authorities to access funds for the response.
- 2,525 foreign nationals are moved from where they spontaneously gathered for safety at police stations to new temporary shelters in Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni municipalities.
- The international humanitarian and national human rights community express concerns that some of the new sites do not meet minimum humanitarian standards and do not provide for adequate human security.
- A government and inter-agency assessment of possible temporary shelter locations is underway in Western Cape Province.

SITUATION - NATIONAL

Gauteng Province

As of 2 June 2008, there are 7,382 displaced people in 23 ad hoc and new temporary shelters.

A joint assessment (UN, IFRC and provincial authorities) took place in Gauteng Province on 29 May 2008 to assess the sites identified for relocation, which allowed partners to provide technical guidance to local officials and contractors on international humanitarian standards.

On 30 May 2008, the Gauteng cabinet issued a “declaration of disaster” for the province, in keeping with the National Disaster Management Act and undertook an ambitious plan to being relocating people who had spontaneously sought refuge at police stations, churches and other community centers to new temporary shelters.

On 1 June 2008, the United Nations, the South African Human Rights Commission, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Oxfam jointly met with senior government officials, including the Minister of the Presidency, to register their concerns over the speed with which people were to be relocated, given that this allowed for neither adequate site preparation nor consultation with the displaced and the communities to which they were to be relocated. The Government acknowledged these concerns but decided to move ahead with its plans, given the urgent need to move people into more suitable conditions. On the same day, provincial authorities began relocating foreign nationals from Jeppe, Cleveland, Bramley, Alexandra, Primrose and Rabie Ridge police stations and Germiston City Hall. By 2 June 2008, 2,525 of the 7,382 displaced had been moved as of 1500 hours to three news sites identified in Midrand, Corlett Garden (north of Johannesburg), and Benrose, south of the city, amid growing concerns over the level of preparedness and suitability of the selected sites.

Table 1. – Status of sites of relocation in Gauteng Province as of 1500 hours, 2 June 2008

New site	From	Arrivals	Concerns
River Road	Bramley and Alexandra SAPS	398 people	Resident community displays hostility to IDPs. No site manager in place. Some women and children have been separated during the movement and sent to other sites.
Rand Airport	Primrose SAPS and Germiston City Hall	1,800 people	Site too dense. According to Sphere standards, should host only 800 tents. Tents too close together. Insufficient space for people and infrastructure. No bathing facilities, but reported to be on their way.
DBSA	Rabie Ridge SAPS	327 people	57 tents erected. No fencing. Resident community displays hostility to IDPs. No available showers.
Vickers Road	Cleveland and Jeppe SAPS	No arrivals	300 tents erected with a total of 680 planned. Significant security concerns lead to its being eliminated as a potential site. Further, Lawyers for Human Rights lodged an affidavit to delay inhabitation.

During the course of the day, authorities abandoned plans to move people to the Vickers Road site due to security concerns. Additionally, the NGO Lawyers for Human Rights obtained an interdictio from the High Court to prevent the relocation of people to this site, after the local community protested their arrival.

Given the speed of the relocation, the international humanitarian and national human rights community have expressed concerns about the potential for a re-traumatization of the people being moved to openly hostile communities. Additionally, without adequate sensitization, many of the displaced expressed fear that they were to be deported and thus resisted relocation from some police stations. Notwithstanding these concerns, the Government of South Africa has committed to implement a stay of deportation for all those affected by the xenophobic attacks and announced its intent to lay the groundwork for their reintegration back into the communities from which they were displaced as soon as possible.

Further, following the recommendation of the Minister of Home Affairs, the Cabinet agreed on 28 May 2008 to provide three-month temporary residency permits to the displaced. Officers of the Department of Home Affairs have been deployed to the ad hoc shelters in Johannesburg to begin the registration of the displaced for permits, although this process was in some cases interrupted by the sudden move of the people.

Western Cape Province

Western Cape currently has the highest number of displaced with 19,486 people hosted in 64 sites (30 May 2008). It has not yet declared the situation a disaster. More than 11,300 people are staying at five “mega” sites, with Soet Water (approximately 5,000 people) being the largest. At a meeting convened on 30 May 2008, the Premier stated that the province has adopted a three-pronged approach to the crisis: ensuring the safety and security of foreign nationals; providing humanitarian relief to the displaced; and re-integrating the displaced into communities under safe conditions. The Premier added that the province intends to achieve this result within the next two months. Some communities, such as the one surrounding Khayelitsha site, are already undertaking significant steps at reintegration, such as jointly rebuilding damaged structures with the affected communities and hosting sporting matches between mixed groups of nationals.

KwaZulu Natal

As of 31 May 2008, nine sites are hosting about 1,814 persons, almost a quarter of whom are Zimbabwean. Following the departure of 790 Mozambicans, repatriated with the assistance of their government, Malawians are now the second largest displaced group in this area.

Table 2 – Location, number of sites and displaced population as of 2 June 2008

Province	Municipality	Sites	Population displaced
Gauteng	Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, West Rand, Sedberg, Tshwane, Metsweding	23	7,382
Western Cape	Cape Town	64	19,486
KwaZulu Natal	Durban	12	1,814
TOTAL		99	28,682

According to the South African police, 62 people have been killed in xenophobic attacks so far, including nine South African citizens, while around 670 persons have been injured. More than 1,300 South Africans have been arrested.

As of 2 June 2008, the total number of foreigners displaced by xenophobic attacks in South Africa has declined to 28,682, as many have returned home or moved in with other families. This number however does thus not reflect the total number displaced, as it includes only those who have fled to public places. It does not reflect those who have fled areas of violence but are currently staying with other members of their community.

The Minister of Justice has announced that special courts will be set up to prosecute those arrested in connection with the xenophobic violence. The new courts will be situated in areas affected by the violence, use existing court facilities that will be provided with additional staff. According to the police, the most arrests took place in Gauteng and Western Cape Provinces.

SITUATION - REGIONAL

The embassy of Burundi has stated that it may seek IOM's assistance to assess shelters to which Burundians have fled and support their repatriation.

The Ethiopian embassy in Pretoria stated that there are 165 Ethiopians temporarily staying in churches. It expects the majority to seek resettlement to a third country.

The government of Ghana has approached IOM to assist in the repatriation of 150 of its nationals fleeing violence in South Africa.

On 2 June 2008, the *Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades* (INGC) in Mozambique deactivated its operational arm, the CENOE, which had assisted with the reception of returnees, in light of the reduction of Mozambicans seeking to repatriate. To date, the INGC has assisted in the repatriation of 36,404 Mozambican nationals, providing them medical and food assistance as well as support to reach areas of origin.

RESPONSE

The response by civil society and private companies in South Africa has continued and remains strong.

In Western Cape, the provincial authorities continue to respond to the needs on the ground and will lead an assessment of existing sites in conjunction with the UN, Red Cross and international NGOs to identify where challenges exist in the implementation of humanitarian standards.

Meanwhile, 40 mediators have been tasked by the provincial government of Western Cape to initiate confidence-building measures among people and communities, in order to build synergy between community leaders, NGOs and municipal and provincial authorities.

In KwaZulu Natal Province, the Department of Safety and Security has upgraded the provincial emergency hotline in response to attacks on foreigners. The Department of Health has been providing medical services at the sites, including a mobile clinic and the provision of ARVs. In addition, the Department of Social Development is assisting with food and emergency shelter, while the South Africa Red Cross Society is distributing NFIs as well as food.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

UNHCR has donated 2,000 tents, which are currently being used in the new sites. UNHCR, IFRC and OCHA have provided technical advice to provincial and municipal authorities on site selection and planning ahead of the relocation and during the process of transfer. Oxfam, MSF, UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA have also assisted provincial and municipal counterparts in their respective sectors advising on international humanitarian standards.

UNHCR brokered an agreement with the Department of Home Affairs for the issuance of conditional temporary legal status under the Immigration Act for the undocumented victims. The UN refugee agency continues to advocate for the government's policy to stay the deportation of victims to be maintained. UNHCR is also providing technical advice on the registration of the displaced.

The UK Department For International Development (DFID) has provided £300,000 (US\$ 590,000) to Oxfam to provide assistance to migrants in temporary shelters in Gauteng Province and £200,000 (US\$ 393,000) to Treatment Action Campaign to give immediate essential assistance to migrants in temporary shelters in the Cape Town area in Western Cape Province, including the provision of basic food and non-food items.

IOM and UNHCR are identifying those in need of voluntary repatriation.

NEEDS

- The rapid assessment organised under by Inter Agency Standing Committee partners and municipal authorities took place in eight ad hoc shelter sites in Gauteng Province on 27 May 2008, the outcomes of which were shared with the National Disaster Management Centre. The mission found that the majority of the sites visited hosted Mozambicans and Zimbabweans. The food quantity was found to be adequate although there are concerns over some of the distribution mechanisms in place. Acute respiratory infections were the main concern at the shelters, with morbidity statistics correlated to the poor living conditions and the lack of personal insulation at sites. Most sites visited were found to have access to water but the water quality and number of water points were unlikely to meet international standards. Most shelter sites were close to police stations. Private security firms have been contracted to provide protection to the displaced. Some concerns were expressed over the protection of women and children, with instances of abuse by security staff reported. Overall, the teams summarized the main priorities as:
 1. The role of IDPs in decision making in future settlement choices – public awareness of choices and rights education were found to be missing
 2. Inadequate attention paid to the recovery and/or securing of property and possessions
 3. Access to health, particularly for women, was poor
 4. Means and resources for repatriation was insufficient
 5. Shelter-related NFIs and personal insulation items were insufficient
 6. Safety and security provisions were inadequate

- In KwaZulu Natal, information on the current situation is still scarce but initial assessments have pointed out that the major areas of need are for support for voluntary repatriation as well as resettlement to home countries.
- The UN is looking at ways to support the provincial disaster management centre in Cape Town in order to enhance coordination among stakeholders and provide technical expertise.

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END

Timeline: Xenophobic attacks spread throughout South Africa

