



WEST AFRICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Association des Barreaux de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (ABAO)
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PROTECTING HUMAN DIGNITY IN THE FACE OF XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE - WABA CONDEMNS 'FOREIGNERS MUST GO' CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The West African Bar Association (WABA) unequivocally condemns the recent surge of xenophobic actions in the Republic of South Africa, disturbingly encapsulated in the slogan "Foreigners Must Go." These actions, reportedly targeting non-South African nationals, many of whom are law-abiding residents, professionals, and entrepreneurs from across the African continent, represent a grave violation of fundamental human rights and the rule of law.

WABA expresses deep concern over reports of harassment, intimidation, violence, forceful displacement, and in some cases killings of foreign nationals, including citizens of West African countries. Such conduct undermines the core principles enshrined in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, particularly the rights to dignity, equality, freedom of movement, and protection from discrimination.

The Association recalls that South Africa, as a constitutional democracy founded on the values of human dignity, equality, and freedom, bears both a moral and legal obligation to protect all persons within its borders, irrespective of nationality or origin. Xenophobia not only erodes these foundational principles but also threatens regional integration efforts and pan-African solidarity.

The South African government must prove to the world that it is not complicit or encourages the ongoing violence against foreign citizens in different parts of the country. WABA therefore calls on the Government of South Africa to urgently take the following steps:

- Take immediate and decisive action to halt all forms of xenophobic violence and rhetoric.
- Ensure the protection and safety of all foreign nationals within its territory.
- Investigate and prosecute perpetrators of xenophobic acts in accordance with the law.
- Promote public education campaigns that foster tolerance, inclusion, and respect for diversity.
- Engage with government of countries whose citizens have fallen victims of brutalization, assaults and deaths as a result of the violence, with a view to providing possible compensation
- Engage with regional bodies, including the African Union and ECOWAS, to reaffirm commitments to African unity and cooperation.

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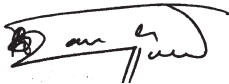


WABA urges all stakeholders including civil society organizations, the media, and community leaders to reject divisive narratives and work collectively toward peaceful coexistence.

The Association stands in solidarity with all victims of xenophobia and reiterates its commitment to promoting justice, human rights, and the rule of law across the West Africa sub-region and the African continent at large.

Africa's strength lies in its unity. Acts of exclusion and hostility against fellow Africans are not only unlawful but fundamentally un-African.

Signed,



BORNOR VARMAH ESQ.

Acting President



ADESINA ADEGBITE, FICMC, MCI Arb

Secretary General



WABA