



25 July 2020

HURISA & KHULUMANI CONDEMN THE ATTACKS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS ON MEMBERS OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY WHO GATHERED OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT ON FRIDAY, 24 JULY 2020 TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE 'JOBS BLOODBATH' IN THEIR INDUSTRY SINCE THE CORONA LOCKDOWN FROM 27 MARCH 2020

The Human Rights Institute of South Africa (HURISA) and Khulumani Support Group (Khulumani) condemn the violence meted out on around 200 members of the hospitality industry when members of the SAPS violently disrupted their peaceful gathering outside Parliament on Friday 24 July 2020. We are appalled by the display of excessive force by law enforcement officials using stun grenades, teargas and a water cannon.

The protest was aimed at getting attention for the plight of some 800,000 workers in the industry whose income has evaporated as a result of the Corona Lockdown. The revised regulations at Level 3 fail to accommodate the reality that the industry receives most of its business after 17:00. If staff are to be home by 21:00 in accordance with current curfew requirements, their hours of trading have become limited to only two hours from 17:00 to 19:00, while their insurers have refused to pay out claims for the interruption of business operations by factors beyond their control.

The South African Constitution guarantees freedom of assembly, of association and of expression to everyone in the country. The unnecessary and violent disruption of Friday's peaceful gathering outside Parliament to explain the desperate situation of everyone who depends on the restaurant industry for their income, represents a violation of these basic rights and freedoms and of the provisions for the right to protest prescribed in the country's Regulations of Gatherings Act.

HURISA and Khulumani call on all law enforcement agencies, all officials employed by the SAPS and the SANDF, to respect the fundamental right of people to hold peaceful gatherings that accord with the provisions of South Africa's own legislation, with those of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and with the African Commission Guidelines on Freedom of Association and Assembly for protection of citizens engaged in protests, marches, assemblies and pickets.

HURISA and Khulumani call on government to urgently meet with the representatives of the hospitality industry to explore remedies to ameliorate the desperate plight of those who serve the industry through dialogue, mediation and negotiation instead of subjecting them to entirely unnecessary violent aggression.

#SAVEJOBS SAVELIVES

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Photo: Instagram: Staff at Casa Toscana, LeSi Restaurant and Blou Hond Theatre in Pretoria