



Media Statement, 28 May 2026

NUM Condemns Attacks on Fellow African Migrants in South Africa

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) strongly condemns the continued attacks, intimidation, and violence directed at fellow Africans in South Africa.

As the NUM we are deeply disturbed by the damage to property, assaults, threats, and xenophobic acts targeting African migrants. Such actions are unacceptable, divisive, and undermine the spirit of African unity and solidarity that our union has always championed.

The NUM will not remain silent while fellow brothers and sisters from the African continent are subjected to violence and harassment.

While we fully recognise and uphold the constitutional right of every South African to engage in peaceful protest and to express legitimate grievances, we draw a clear line between peaceful demonstration and acts of criminality, intimidation, and destruction.

Peaceful protest must never be used as a cover for lawlessness or the targeting of vulnerable communities.

The NUM has a proud and long-standing history of solidarity with migrant workers. Many of the founding fathers and early leaders of our union were migrants from various African countries who played a pivotal role in building this union.

To this day, a significant number of our members are migrant workers from sister nations including Lesotho, Mozambique, Eswatini, Botswana, and Namibia. We have worked hand-in-hand with these comrades in the mines, shafts, and workplaces, fighting together for better wages, safer working conditions, and workers' rights.

Furthermore, the NUM maintains strong fraternal relations with trade unions across the African continent. We continue to collaborate on issues of common concern such as labour rights, regional economic integration, and the protection of workers who cross borders in search of decent work.

We call on all workers, communities, and political formations to reject xenophobia and narrow nationalism. African workers share a common history of struggle against colonialism, apartheid, and exploitation. Our strength lies in our unity, not in turning against one another.

The NUM urges the South African government, law enforcement agencies, and community leaders to act decisively to protect all workers, restore calm, and ensure that those responsible for violence and destruction are brought to justice.

Government must urgently intervene

The NUM calls on the government to urgently address the critical issue of South Africa's porous borders to restore order and national security.

While South Africa remains a welcoming nation, all migrants in the country have a fundamental responsibility to respect and abide by our laws, regulations, and municipal bylaws. Failure to do so undermines the rule of law and places undue pressure on local communities.

We acknowledge that the grievances and concerns raised by the marchers are valid. Issues such as the high rate of unemployment and persistent crime continue to severely affect South African communities. The Government has a duty to respond to these concerns with the urgency and seriousness they deserve, through decisive policy interventions and effective implementation.

The NUM calls on the authorities to engage constructively with citizens, strengthen border management, enforce immigration laws fairly, and prioritise job creation and crime-fighting measures to build a more secure and prosperous South Africa for all who abide by its laws.

We further appeal to our members and all progressive forces to promote tolerance, solidarity, and peaceful coexistence in the workplaces and communities where we live and work.

