



# AFRICA PROJECT FOR PARTICIPATORY SOCIETY

**Inquiry concerning South African residents' perceptions of deportation and the Zimbabwean Documentation Project**

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## **Executive Summary**

This report presents the findings of an exploratory inquiry conducted under the auspices of The African Project for a Participatory Society during the months of July & August of 2011. The purpose was to gauge the reactions of South Africans to the immigration policies, particularly perceptions of the Zimbabwe Dispensation Project (ZDP). The data suggests that although, in general, perceptions appear to be evenly divided, a significant number of respondents believe a violent response could be triggered if mass-deportation raids were to occur.

Data analysis conducted in light of previous research reveals strong historical links between vigilante violence and state policy, which seems to support the findings of the inquiry. Historical cases examined include the 1930s mass deportations of Mexican-Americans, the 1949 riots at Cato Manor, and the 2008 “xenophobic” pogroms. While neither the current study nor the previous literature is conclusive, suggesting the possible fruitfulness of further research, the strong correlation between mass-deportation raids (among other state measures) and xenophobic violence leads to the recommendation for a more inclusive government policy.

## Introduction

Across the African continent, socio-economic and political catastrophes (technically known as push factors) have plunged millions of individuals into increasingly impossible situations. Seeing South Africa as one of the few accessible places offering the possibility of a better life (due to what are called pull factors), millions have made their way into the country where, due to various reasons from fear of rejection to the state's lack of processing capacity, many have remained undocumented. By far the greatest number of undocumented individuals have come from Zimbabwe, with whom SA shares its northern border.

The presence of nationals from across the continent in South Africa have led to rising tensions between them and the SA citizens. The poverty of most South Africans is seen to be the result of resource scarcity, and “black”<sup>1</sup>“foreigners”<sup>2</sup> (as opposed to mostly white American and European nationals who are regarded as assets to the country) are seen as unwanted competition for scarce resources. Resentment reached a boiling point in 2008 when xenophobic attacks spread throughout the country.

It is in this context that the Zimbabwe Documentation Project (ZDP) was launched in September 2010. The main aim of the ZDP was to document all the undocumented Zimbabweans living in South Africa. During the ZDP process a moratorium was put on all deportations of Zimbabwean citizens. At the beginning of this month (August 2011), the Department of Home Affairs announced that it had finished adjudicating 275 762 applications it received. Based on estimates by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) that between 1 and 1.5 million Zimbabweans migrants are living in South Africa, the majority were not covered by the ZDP.

In an official statement Home Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma said that the government had no plans to engage in “mass deportation” of Zimbabweans.

ZDP head Jacob Mamabolo told a media briefing in Pretoria that "upon completion of the grace period, anyone found not to have documentation will be deported."

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper the term “black” (hereafter without scare-quotes) is used in the inclusive sense of “person of colour”; anyone born into a social group outside the dominant Euro-American grouping is described as black. This is consistent with how such people are treated in reality, for example there were multiple instances of attacks on people of Asian-descent (popularly considered as “Indian” and “Chinese”) during the 2008 pogroms. For details see *‘What Happened?’: A Narrative of the May 2008 Xenophobic Violence* by Annsilla Nyar

<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the term “foreigner” (hereafter used without scare-quotes) is used as practically applied in reality, that is it includes documented and undocumented dark-skinned foreign-nationals as well as South African citizens who are treated similarly, notably Shangaan, Venda and Pedi people from the North of the country; those whose physical appearance, accent or gait fits the arbitrary stereotype of foreign-nationals; those caught marrying, loving, befriending or otherwise fraternising with such black foreigners; and SA citizens unwilling to join violent mobs – among others. Again for further details on such cases consult Nyar or Masingo et al (2010)

Considering the figures outlined above, it is clear that the majority of Zimbabwean citizens in South Africa, defined by the Minister as “those who have failed to take advantage of this process”, will not have ZDP documentation upon completion of the “grace period.” Therefore when the Minister asserts that all these migrants “will in due course, face the full consequence of South Africa’s immigration laws”, it is unclear what exactly is intended by the Department, since deportation must undoubtedly be regarded as a possible “consequence of South Africa’s immigration laws” for the large mass of Zimbabweans at present.

These are some of the “inconsistencies in communications by Home Affairs on the matter” that Braam Hanekom of the Cape Town-based NGO *PASSOP* said had “created widespread confusion. If we as an organization don’t know [what is going on] and other organizations are equally confused, we can safely assume that the entire Zimbabwean community is confused,”<sup>3</sup>

The present study was done as a step towards clarifying this situation of general confusion. Lucky Katenhe, a Zimbabwean member of staff at *PASSOP*, said of his friends in the Zimbabwean community “Some didn’t even know about it and some were not sure if it was a genuine process; they were worried it was ploy to arrest them,” he said. “Now they are quite worried about being deported because the situation back home is quite bad.”

The 2008 pogroms, as Misago et al point out, were a result of “a discourse that constructs social violence as ‘crime-fighting’.” APPS is concerned that if mass deportations are conducted at the end of the ZDP process, this might trigger new attacks on black foreigners due to “a social construction of crime which sees foreign nationals as criminals and attacks against them as a form of social law enforcement in the perceived absence of law enforcement (and border control) by the state.”<sup>4</sup>

The present inquiry was conducted to establish whether such concern was reasonably justified by examining fresh empirical evidence in the light of existing research.

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<sup>3</sup> Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), *South Africa: Still no clarity on Zimbabwean deportations*, 2 August 2011, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4e3f7e702.html> [accessed 16 August 2011]

<sup>4</sup> *MAY 2008 VIOLENCE AGAINST FOREIGN NATIONALS IN SOUTH AFRICA: UNDERSTANDING CAUSES AND EVALUATING RESPONSES*; Jean Pierre Misago, Tamlyn Monson, Tara Polzer and Loren Landau; 2010

## Method

One hundred individuals were presented with a short questionnaire. The respondents were chosen from two informal settlements, Masiphumelele & Imizamo Yethu, as well as in the established township of Gugulethu. 35 persons were surveyed from each informal settlement, 20 from Gugulethu. Lastly, 10 individuals in the Cape Town CBD were surveyed. Two field researchers, Mandisi Majavu and Kofi Makapela, assisted in the data collection.

The questionnaire consisted of six yes/no questions and one open question (question 2). The questions were written in English; since this was not the first language of most respondents, assistance was given regarding translation as required by the field researchers. The majority of respondents were Xhosa-speaking, with a minority of Afrikaans-speaking individuals. Names and contact details were recorded for the purposes of follow-up research; however, respondents who preferred to remain anonymous were allowed to do so. Researchers made a conscious effort to select an even balance of respondents from among younger and older as well as male and female demographics.

Of the respondents:

1. The average age was 55 years old.
2. The youngest were 18 and the oldest 66.
3. 44% were female and 56% were male.

The surveys were conducted from mid-morning to early afternoon on weekdays, primarily in residential areas. It is therefore likely that the majority of individuals were either home-makers, pensioners or unemployed. Occupation was not recorded in order to simplify the survey as much as possible. There is evidence to suggest that these demographic details would have little effect on the outcome of the research since

Negative attitudes [...] are so pervasive and widespread that it is actually impossible to identify any kind of xenophobe profile'. In other words, the poor and the rich, the employed and the unemployed, the male and the female, the black and the white, the conservative and the radical, all express remarkably similar attitudes.<sup>5</sup>

The new data has been analysed together with short historical case-studies within a framework of collective analogic reasoning. Upon examination, the results of the present survey have been seen to be consistent with these findings.

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<sup>5</sup> Crush, J. and Pendleton, 2004, *Regionalizing Xenophobia? Citizen attitudes to immigration and refugee policy in Southern Africa*; SAMP: Migration Policy series No. 30

## Analysis

Responses were almost evenly divided. Except for the first and last yes/no questions, there was less than 17% difference between responses YES and NO for all questions. The two exceptions reinforce this ambivalence in the response: in Question 1 a relatively large majority thought non-applicants should be deported, but in Question 6 another relatively large majority thought that state funds should be spent on social services instead of on deportations.

In general, the people we surveyed were very critical of the ZDP. A large number of people commented to researchers that the South African government has done more than enough for Zimbabweans, hence anyone found without papers ought to be deported back to Zimbabwe. There are some who felt that no one should be deported. Yet, a small number of people surveyed for this study pointed out to researchers that the ZDP was a waste of resources and that the government should have deported all African foreign-nationals, Zimbabwean or otherwise, *en masse* from the beginning.

Respondents told researchers that the reason for their suffering could be traced back to black foreigners who were taking all their jobs and resources. This dovetailed with a Malthusian notion that the country was already “overcrowded” and had “no space” for more people. In *Deportation is Freedom: the Orwellian world of immigration controls*, the author, Steve Cohen, highlights the concept of *moral panic* which he says “has entered political discourse through Stanley Cohen’s pioneering work *Folk Devils and Moral Panic*. Cohen describes the concept in this way:

‘Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerge to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians, and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible.’

Cohen’s book was first published in 1972 as a contribution to radical criminology. It did have, or should have had, a particular relevance to the perception of the alien (particularly the black alien)...[which] situates asylum-seekers among the moral devils – along with single mothers, paedophiles, drug-takers and welfare cheats. In fact, though Cohen doesn’t say so, it is in many ways the accumulative image of these deviants that constructs the popular image of the asylum-seeker, and indeed of everyone else subject to immigration controls.

The lengthy quotes of comrades Cohen & Cohen serve to outline a theoretical frame for two connected emergent phenomena. The first, localized instance involves the demonization of black foreigners. The popularity of this panic, despite the complete absence of any supporting evidence, is both the result and the project of state instituted immigration control.

Moral panic, manifest here as pure *irrational spectacle*, is – as Guy Debord hypothesized in *The Society of the Spectacle* – ‘the very heart of this real society’s unreality. In all of its particular manifestations — news, propaganda, advertising, entertainment — the spectacle represents the dominant model of life. It is the omnipresent affirmation of the choices that have *already been made* in the sphere of production and in the consumption implied by that production”

This is the basis of Winthrop Jordan’s famous formulation of slavery as an *unthinking decision*.<sup>6</sup> Just as the material conditions of pioneer societies create conditions where the recomposition of slavery seemed to be natural, so too spectacular societies are seen to create conditions where apparently ‘ethnic’ violence is fomented. Such conditions include what Michael Neocosmos has described as an “absence of politics”.<sup>7</sup> In such conditions people seem to “respond (more or less) automatically to the manner in which they are addressed.”<sup>8</sup>

One relevant historical case that manifested the said conditions was the “anti-Indian” riots which broke out at Cato Manor, a township just outside Durban which

“In January 1949... experienced a weekend of public violence in which 142 people died and at least 1 087 were injured. Mobs of Africans rampaged through areas within the city attacking Indians and looting and destroying Indian-owned property. During the conflict 87 Africans, 50 Indians, one white and four 'unidentified' people died.”<sup>9</sup>

According to Fatima Meer,

Despite their tragic results, the riots left the Indian community with little rancour against the Africans. There was doubt of African dependability in the face of press and governmental provocation; but direct blame was apportioned to the Government, the white public, and the local authority in Durban, which had for years waged a vendetta of unrestrained malignancy against the Indian people.

The results of interviews with seventy Indians, chosen at random and representing a reasonably fair cross-section of the community, substantiated this observation when they gave white instigation as the most common single cause of the riots. Durban of this period was plagued by hysterical anti-Indianism... Anti-Indianism

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<sup>6</sup> W. Jordan; *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812*

<sup>7</sup> See *From 'Foreign Natives' to 'Native Foreigners': Explaining Xenophobia in Post-apartheid South Africa; The Politics of Fear and the Fear of Politics*

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Iain Edwards and Tim Nuttall; *Seizing the moment : the January 1949 riots, proletarian populism and the structures of African urban life in Durban during the late 1940's*

kept Members of Parliament in their seats, newspapers on the streets and provided the most popular vote-catching bait in the 1948 elections.<sup>10</sup>

Clearly Ms. Meer believes Indians were made into *folk-devils* at the time, and the evidence suggests that this was so. One example from a black newspaper alleged that “widespread venereal disease amongst Africans was the result of Indian lust for African women.” This echoes similar allegations regarding black foreigners encountered by APPS field-researchers.

In fact, many important echoes can be found between this historical case and the 2008 pogroms. Some of the most significant are illustrated here:

“The unreality of it all provoked laughter and heckling. Individual Indians were jostled on the pavements; some were robbed of their Friday pay... Nearby white shops remained unscathed. The 'rules of the riot', developed the day before, had been rapidly learnt”<sup>11</sup>

In both cases, people unquestionably acted on the assumption that a certain group was the cause of their problems, therefore leading them to vent their anger on the group. Other groups who fulfilled similar roles are ignored. Thus a situation develops where, although rioters claimed to be angered at high rents and basic commodities, at the end “the Africans believed they'd won the 'Battle of Cato Manor’” when “Indian landlords and traders were replaced by black traders and shack lords.”<sup>12</sup>

The genuine anguish over the total domination of life by the production and consumption of commodities seems to be *totally displaced* into anguish over the *details* of that domination.

“The concept of a definite “source” or “agent” of frustration in the experimental psychological literature has given rise to a sharp distinction between *direct* and *displaced* aggression... While the theoretical distinction between direct and displaced aggression is valuable, in actual practice a great deal of ethnic aggression appears to be both direct *and* displaced. One group may become the sole target of aggression as a result of frustrations produced by it and others.”<sup>13</sup>

The reasons why “Indians” happened to be the group targeted in this particular instance are explained by Edwards and Nuttall thus:

The potential for populist unity was strongest when directed against external targets. The structural position of Indians, particularly in the spheres of land, housing, and trade,

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<sup>10</sup> Fatima Meer, 'African and Indian in Durban' in Africa South, Vol IV, No 4, July- September. 1960

<sup>11</sup> Iain Edwards and Tim Nuttall; *Seizing the moment : the January 1949 riots, proletarian populism and the structures of African urban life in Durban during the late 1940's; 1990*

<sup>12</sup> *Tension Builds: Exploitation, resistance and beer*; South African History Online;

<http://www.sahistory.org.za/places/tension-builds-exploitation-resistance-and-beer>; accessed 22 August 2011)

<sup>13</sup> *Direct, Displaced, and Cumulative Ethnic Aggression*; Donald L Horowitz; Comparative Politics Vol. 6, No. 1, Oct., 1973

provided a consistently fertile and unifying negative focus in African politics. When directed against the state, this politics was far more ambiguous and led to considerable disunity amongst the proletariat...

Analogous explanations could be forwarded regarding the targeting of black foreigners. This is because every structure of the state is created to displace direct aggression by directing displaced aggression towards folk-devils. For example, in his study *Targeting Foreigners*, Themba Masuku surveyed the attitudes of law enforcement members.

The survey asked police officials whether they thought that most illegal immigrants commit crime... the vast majority (87%) of SAPS members do think this is the case. [...] Despite an overwhelming perception that undocumented immigrants are involved in crime, no statistical evidence is available to substantiate these claims.<sup>14</sup>

The question of whether police hold these views because of the general public opinion or vice versa is resolved if we accept the thesis that the spectacle of moral-panic is both “*the result and the project of the dominant system of production.*” Similarly it is easy to see how the following news dispatch serves to direct aggression towards Zimbabweans rather than on a system that’s reduced millions of South Africans to state dependants:

“Thousands of foreigners from neighbouring states are enjoying the benefits of South Africa's welfare and pension systems, MPs heard on Tuesday.” Immigration services deputy director general Jackson McKay told a joint sitting of Parliament. “Some of these Zimbabweans are known as John Smith in South Africa, and John Ngcube in Zimbabwe. And indeed, they live two lives. They have assets, they have bank [accounts], they have everything in Zimbabwe; and they have another identity in South Africa,” McKay said. Asked after the briefing for figures, McKay said these were not immediately available.<sup>15</sup>

The case of Cato Manor seems to confirm the answer Michael Neocosmos supplies for his own question regarding the case of the 2008 pogroms:

“Why, we may ask, if people feel economically deprived should they scapegoat [black] foreigners? Surely this must have something to do with both the political weakness of [black] foreigners and with the failure to blame others such as whites, the bourgeoisie, politicians or even capital (domestic or foreign).”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *TARGETING FOREIGNERS: Xenophobia among Johannesburg's police*; Themba Masuku Published in Crime Quarterly No 15 2006

<sup>15</sup> *FOREIGNERS FLEECING SA WELFARE SYSTEM, MPS TOLD*, Sapa; Aug 16

<sup>16</sup> Neocosmos, M. (2006) *From 'Foreign Natives' to 'Native Foreigners'. Explaining Xenophobia in Post-apartheid South Africa.*

That is to say, they both seem to be instances of state directed displaced aggression. When a member of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce justified sending threats to Somali businesses in October 2008, they bitterly complained that “We are dying here, sister. Our children are hungry... During the day Shoprite take our business and during the night, it’s the foreigners.” Yet to protest at such perceived injustice, the group chose to threaten Somali business people while doing nothing to address competition from Shoprite.”<sup>17</sup>

Thus, as much as the dominant mode of production undoubtedly determines both the motives and the choices available to participants of a situation, economic causes alone are not enough to provide understanding of that situation. To dismiss all else, as the director of the Bantu Administration Department in Durban did after the Cato Manor “women’s riots” of 1959, is therefore counterproductive.

At that time he said,

"Even the women who started off this tragic course did not express their grievances in terms of bare, basic and intrinsic facts. They have talked about Kaffir beer and illicit liquor, transport and housing, shack removals and influx control, the keeping of livestock and the keeping of husbands, gambling dens and shebeens. They have talked about these subjects as if they mattered for their own sakes. Only here and there did the real, naked reason break to the surface... The basic and ultimate reason is an economic one.”<sup>18</sup>

But just as the economy was not enough to describe why the beer-halls had not been attacked in the “anti-Indian riots” of 1949, economics alone doesn’t explain why they *were* attacked in 1959. In grappling with this issue in 2008 (why Somali but not Shoprite?), Suren Pillay came to describe the process thus: “Caught between the pincers of the Law and the Economy, belonging and survival are transformed into xenophobia and violence”<sup>19</sup> – it is the first of these two pincers, Law, that we must now explore.

As the present survey highlighted, most respondents perceived the state as being ineffective in restricting immigration, and many believe that this frustration could lead to violence (see Question 5 in Appendix A). To understand these perceptions recourse must once more be made to the spectacle, this time considered not just in its manifestation as *moral panic* but in its *totalitarian* apparatus of social control:

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<sup>17</sup> *TOLERATING INTOLERANCE: XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA*; CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS IN AFRICA INITIATIVE (CRAI); 2009

<sup>18</sup> *SHOOTING AT SHARPEVILLE: THE AGONY OF SOUTH AFRICA*; AMBROSE REEVES; 1961

<sup>19</sup> *Dangerous Ordinary Discourse: Preliminary reflections on xenophobia, violence and the public sphere in South Africa*; Suren Pillay; 2010

Constitutional law and border patrol, identity documentation and police corruption, property rights and mob violence are here seen as interlocking links in a chain-fence. “In both form and content the spectacle serves as a total justification of the conditions and goals of the existing system. The spectacle also represents the *constant presence* of this justification...”In this way, as Cohen points out, *everyone* is an immigration officer.<sup>20</sup>

In the pogroms of 2008, this form of analogical reasoning was applied to good effect. According to Sowa and Majumdar,

“Logical and analogical reasoning are sometimes viewed as mutually exclusive alternatives, but formal logic is actually a highly constrained and stylized method of using analogies. Before any subject can be formalized to the stage where logic can be applied to it, analogies must be used to derive an abstract representation from a mass of irrelevant detail. After the formalization is complete, every logical step — of deduction, induction, or abduction — involves the application of some version of analogy.”<sup>21</sup>

The pogroms tended to be executed as a series of unconscious analogical steps, demonstrating in both their form and their content the totalitarian nature of the system they served to support. The formal aspect has been documented in great detail. There are two significant points in this regard:1) the attacks, from their planning, their methods of target identification, to their ultimate execution, were either directly imitative of or analogous to the forms of state immigration control; and2) many of the formations which led the attacks were analogous to state formations.

A few pertinent examples of point 1) should suffice to convey the intended meaning. In Alexandria township, attacks began to be planned at meetings with police. At these meetings police agreed to undertake deportation raids on locations identified by hostel-dwellers. The attacks began before these raids took place. In this case, police forms of identification followed the lead of the attackers.

“The police confirmed that a few days before the attacks, the police and CPF called a community meeting...” where police asked community members ‘to point out those involved in crime.’ We need them [hostel residents] to co-operate and assist us to identify the criminals. [...] Respondents reported that from that meeting Indunas and other community leaders started organising meetings in which attacks were planned.”

These forms of identification, which according to the following speaker were developed during apartheid, are still commonly employed: “They encouraged the hatred of outsiders and people would

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<sup>20</sup> See Cohen, *Deportation is Freedom*; and Neocosmos, *From Foreign Natives to Native Foreigners* for an examination of the constitutional basis of xenophobia

<sup>21</sup> *Analogical Reasoning*; John F. Sowa and Arun K. Majumdar in A. Aldo, W. Lex, & B. Ganter, eds. (2003) *Conceptual Structures for Knowledge Creation and Communication*, LNAI 2746, Springer-Verlag, pp. 16-36

point out to them that at such a place there is a Shangaan person and they would come and deport you.”<sup>22</sup>

In other cases “Strategies of identification of ‘foreignness’ have evolved from the methods used by the SAPS to identify illegal immigrants. For example, the Zulu word for ‘elbow’, as used to identify ‘foreigners’ in the xenophobic attacks, is directly derived from the SAPS.”<sup>23</sup>

Another form developed during apartheid, this time drawn from police by mobs, describes a familiar scene:

It was therefore common practice to make random arrests on the basis of skin colour, vaccination marks, pronunciation of particular words, or understanding of local dialect. This was often done in front of local communities who witnessed the physical abuse of foreign nationals and dispossession and destruction of their property, often allowing locals to reap the spoils.<sup>24</sup>

Lastly, in Ramaphosa “*There were people conducting a door to door campaign searching for identity documents – that is verifiable.*”<sup>25</sup>The second formal aspect under consideration is closely related to the content of the pogroms. This involves the quasi-state formations which operate in the townships. In a newspaper article Jeanne Pierre Misago, a researcher at the Wits University Forced Migration Studies Programme asserted that “The community leaders-- the street committees, the comrades, the CPF (Community Policing Forum) as they are called-- are involved.They were the ones who were organising the attacks.”<sup>26</sup>

The fact that these formations led the attacks is a reflection of the content of the attacks inasmuch as the vigilante groups came to constitute themselves as a “home-made” Department of Home Affairs. According to Misago et al (2010), the most prominent of these formations, the CPFs, are also the most dangerous, since “there is a real risk that CPFs implicitly legitimise citizens’ involvement in the policing of a defined space. This can lead, and has led, to dangerous consequences when the formal police structures are perceived to be failing.”<sup>27</sup>

The evidence gathered during field-research seems to support this. While many (47%) affirmed their belief in the state's capacity to deport all undocumented individuals should such an attempt be made,

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<sup>22</sup> MAY 2008 VIOLENCE AGAINST FOREIGN NATIONALS IN SOUTH AFRICA UNDERSTANDING CAUSES AND EVALUATING RESPONSES By Jean Pierre Misago, Tamlyn Monson, Tara Polzer and Loren Landau; 2010

<sup>23</sup> ‘What Happened?’: A Narrative of the May 2008 Xenophobic Violence; Annsilla Nyar;

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> Dube, N. ‘Many Shades of the Truth’ –the Ramaphosa case study, Research for Atlantic Philanthropies, January 2009

<sup>26</sup> Xenophobic violence last May organised by community leaders, says researcher, Cape Times (South Africa); 11 March 2009

<sup>27</sup> Towards Tolerance, Law, and Dignity: Addressing Violence against Foreign Nationals in South Africa; Jean Pierre Misago with Loren B. Landau and Tamlyn Monson; 2009

even more (51%) believed that there would be a violent backlash if such an attempt were made and discovered to have been ineffective.

While a failure of state control is clearly an important factor, a sizable minority (47%) believed that the mere occurrence of mass deportations, regardless of their effectiveness, will trigger members of the community to begin attacking black foreigners. The direct link between even effective mass-deportation and vigilante violence can be seen in the film *A Forgotten Injustice*, which documents the history of the mass deportation of more than 2 million Mexican-Americans from the USA in the 1930s. Here the distinction between legal and illegal deportations was almost non-existent.

Raymond Rodriguez, co-author of *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s*, says in the film: “Groups of vigilante-type individuals would come onto a Mexican labor camp and say, ‘If you guys aren’t out of here in the morning, we’re burning you out.’ So people left. Or, in other instances, people would be forced to leave by the sheriff coming to your place, putting a gun to your head and saying, ‘If you don’t leave, you’re dying.’”

## Conclusion

This report traced the possibility of xenophobic violence to a series of what historian Winthrop Jordan famously described as “unthinking decisions.” It sought to examine the reaction of South Africans to immigration control in general, and mass-deportation raids in particular, as an example of analogical reasoning in which mob violence is seen as a supplementary form of immigration control.

Although the official statements have declared that mass deportation will not commence once the moratorium is lifted, the Department of Home Affairs has not been clear about what would happen to the many thousands who will be made eligible for deportation.

“Jacob Matakanye of the Musina Legal Advice Centre said local police and Home Affairs officials had been arresting undocumented Zimbabweans until his office, along with the provincial police department, intervened two weeks ago.”

After 31 July, he said, “we’re expecting the worst... they’re going to arrest a lot of people and deport them, but they’ll come back in numbers.”<sup>28</sup>

The majority of respondents believed that if the above mentioned situation did in fact take place, elements of their community would respond with violence. The literature examined in the data analysis clearly supports this perception.

These factors seem to affirm the conclusions reached by Elkins & Sides: “As mass deportation is almost certainly infeasible and arguably inhumane, it seems advisable to admit long-time residents and birth residents as full citizens.”<sup>29</sup>In light of the imitative logic of xenophobic attacks, this appears to be a more effective means of preventing renewed bloodshed.

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<sup>28</sup> Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), *SOUTH AFRICA: Deportation threat for undocumented Zimbabweans*, 6 July 2011

<sup>29</sup> *Seeking Stateness*; Zachary Elkins & John Sides; 2008

## Appendix A:

### Questions

1. Do you think that the South African government should deport the Zimbabweans who did not apply for the ZDP?
  - a. What about those who applied, but did not get their passports from the Zim government?
2. If no, what do you think the South African government should do about undocumented Zimbabweans in the country?
3. If yes, do you think that once people see that many foreigners are being deported, they will also start chasing foreigners away from the townships?
4. If the South African government does try to deport undocumented Zimbabweans, do you think that it has the capacity to deport all the undocumented Zimbabweans?
5. If no, do you think that once people see that the government is not doing a good job at deporting all the undocumented Zimbabweans, they will take it upon themselves to chase foreigners away from South African townships?
6. It will cost money to deport all undocumented Zimbabweans. Do you think it's better if the government spends its resources on housing, education, & healthcare for all instead of deporting Zimbabweans?

## Appendix B:

### Responses

1. 35% said NO & 65% said YES to question 1
2. 46% said YES to question 1a, 51% said NO, and 3% were undecided
3. Answers to question 2 included, *inter alia*, the following responses, listed from most to least common:

Undecided, give them another chance to apply, extend project to include all undocumented, eliminate immigration control

4. 43% said YES, 4% were undecided and 53% said NO to question 3,
5. 10% were undecided, 47% said YES and 33% said NO to question 4
6. 51% said YES, 14% were undecided and 35% said NO to question 5
7. 58% said YES to question 6, 34% said NO and 8% were undecided for question 6