

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

On Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

The Ghana Youth Federation (GYF) expresses profound concern over the recent incidents of xenophobic violence in South Africa and unequivocally condemns all acts of violence, exclusion, and discrimination directed at African nationals. Such actions are not merely episodic disturbances; they represent a fundamental rupture in the ethical and political architecture of Pan-Africanism and threaten the integrity of our shared continental project.

We recognize that these tensions do not arise in a vacuum. Persistent structural challenges, including youth unemployment, widening inequality, spatial exclusion, and limited economic mobility, continue to shape lived realities for many young South Africans. These grievances are legitimate and demand urgent, systemic, and policy-driven interventions. However, the displacement of frustration onto fellow Africans constitutes a misdirection of agency that ultimately deepens fragmentation while leaving root causes unaddressed.

History offers both a warning and a guide. The liberation of South Africa was not an isolated national triumph but a continental endeavor, sustained by the sacrifices, solidarity, and material support of African states and peoples. This shared legacy imposes a normative obligation on present generations to uphold a higher standard of fraternity, reciprocity, and collective responsibility. To disregard this is to erode the very foundations upon which contemporary African cooperation rests.

In advancing a constructive path forward, GYF underscores the necessity for coherent migration governance frameworks, inclusive economic policies, and transparent, rights-based repatriation processes where applicable. Concretely, this means invoking and operationalizing the African Union's Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and the AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa under Agenda 2063; establishing AU-mediated bilateral migration compacts between South Africa and affected states to regulate mobility through formal, documented channels; directing the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to convene an emergency session on intra-regional migration governance with binding implementation timelines; and ensuring that any repatriation processes comply with the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, with independent monitoring by the African Commission.

The Africa we seek to build cannot be sustained by exclusionary nationalism or reactionary impulses. It must be defined by functional integration, intra-African mobility, economic complementarity, and shared prosperity. Young people, who constitute the demographic core of the continent, must reject narratives of division and instead assert leadership in shaping a more cohesive and forward-looking African identity.

GYF therefore calls on governments, regional institutions, and civil society actors to act with urgency and strategic clarity: to safeguard lives and property, to enforce accountability, and to implement structural reforms that address the underlying socio-economic drivers of discontent. We specifically urge the South African government to publicly commit to a zero-tolerance policy on xenophobic violence and to set a 90-day review of its Integrated National Migration Policy in consultation with AU institutions. We further call on the African Union Commission to fast-track the ratification and domestication of the Free Movement Protocol across member states.

Africa's future will not be secured by walls of suspicion, but by bridges of solidarity. The responsibility to build them rests with us.

Issued by:

The Communications Directorate

Ghana Youth Federation (GYF)

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