

Solidarity Message regarding the cold-blooded murder of Lindokuhle Mnguni

We strongly condemn the murder of Lindokuhle Mnguni, an activist of the social movement Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM) in South Africa. We extend our deepest condolences to his family and the activists of AbM. We mourn Lindokuhle with AbM.

Lindokuhle Mnguni, 28 years old, who was shot in his sleep by contract killers at 01:30 a.m. on 20 August, was the chairperson of the eKhenana commune, an informal settlement in Cato Manor, Durban. His partner was also hit and is fighting for her life. Lindokuhle Mnguni is the fourth member of AbM to be murdered since the beginning of this year. Due to the acute threat to their lives, other activists and leaders of the movement are currently in hiding.

The residents of eKhenana, a collection of self-built shacks, live the mutual help and solidarity that the shack dwellers' movement has made its motto. A chicken farm and a vegetable garden are cultivated together, and cooking and eating are also done communally. After the heavy floods that hit Durban in April, meals were prepared here for the victims who had become homeless. eKhenana has already lost leading members, Ayanda Ngila in March and Nokuthula Mabaso in May, who were also murdered in a cowardly manner. Profitable construction projects are to be implemented on the land owned by the city - eKhenana stands in the way of the interests of influential local politicians.

Abahlali represents the interests of the shack dwellers, the poor and marginalised, and advocates for them to be able to live a dignified life and for their rights as citizens to be respected. AbM demands the right to the city for all, which means that the poor should also be allowed to live close to the city centre, that they are entitled to municipal services such as water, sanitation, security and roads, and that they are listened to. Their slogans are: Umhlaba (land) - Izindlu (housing) – neSithunzi (dignity).

Two representatives of KEESA and SOLIFONDS visited eKhenana in June this year, AbM members told them about the constant threats and death threats against land activists in the community. Both organisations have been in contact with AbM for several years. KEESA and SOLIFONDS are impressed by and in solidarity with the peaceful struggle of AbM and its members, including the eKhenana community, for social justice and inclusion.

KEESA and SOLIFONDS call on the South African authorities to hold the perpetrators and their clients accountable and to ensure the protection of eKhenana and AbM activists.