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Attacks on Abahlali baseMjondolo Movement

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The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and the AIDS Law Project (ALP) are concerned by reports of violence and intimidation against members of the Abahlali baseMjondolo Movement (ABM) in the Kennedy Road informal settlement in Durban. ABM is a community based organisation that works to improve conditions for shack dwellers.

According to a statement released by several civil society groups, local ANC people allegedly drove leaders of the ABM and others out of the settlement. We have received further reports that the people carrying out the attacks sang anti Mpondo slogans and that the police allowed the violent attacks to be carried out. Furthermore, it is alleged that the police, instead of arresting the attackers, have arrested members of the Kennedy Road Development Committee, an organisation targeted by the attackers.

If the allegations being made are true, they are extremely serious. Violence was often used under the apartheid government to secure political advantage in Kwazulu-Natal. These methods should be confined to our past. South Africa is now a constitutional democracy in which the only mechanisms of securing political power should be non-violent and lawful.

We call on President Jacob Zuma, the South African Human Rights Commission and the Independent Complaints Directorate to meet with the residents of Kennedy Road and to investigate the allegations against the local ANC branch and the police.

To sign a petition in support of the Kennedy Road residents please click here.

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