



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ATM COMMEMORATES HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

The African Transformation Movement (ATM) pays homage to the selfless men and women of this country, who on this day 63 years ago, were massacred in absolute brutality at the hands of the Apartheid regime after they marched peacefully in Sharpeville against the brutal, inhumane, and degrading laws of the time, particularly pass laws.

We must first acknowledge that South Africa has since come a long way from that day and has made many strides over the years. In 1996, we passed a constitution that guarantees all citizens, regardless of their race, sex, or creed, their inalienable and non-derogable right to life, equality, and human dignity. A constitution that is now the cornerstone of our democracy.

However, over the years we have also seen signs of regression and intolerance from the ANC government. We are reminded particularly of the Marikana mine workers who were shot and killed in cold blood for protesting and demanding a living wage after one of the drafters of our constitution called for "concomitant" action against the peaceful demonstrators, leaving many children without fathers and many wives without husbands. Marikana remains the most painful event since the birth of our constitutional democratic experiment.

The African Transformation Movement also notes that today's Human Rights Day, unlike many others in past, comes a day after very successful nationwide protests and demonstrations against load-shedding, poverty, and unemployment. The national shutdown on the 20th of March could not have gone any better. The masses of our people from different political parties and civil society, came together to make the call that enough was enough - loadshedding, unemployment and a rise in crime had to come to an end. Although the regime had deployed troops to intimidate the masses of our people, the anger and frustration of ordinary citizens outweighed whatever fears the regime was trying to instil.

Finally, the African Transformation Movement calls on South Africans to continue the fight for their rights and intensify it where necessary. Having electricity 24 hours a day, having a job and living in a safe community should not be a privilege that only a few can enjoy, that is not the South Africa our forefathers envisaged, and it is certainly not a South Africa we as the African Transformation Movement want for the people of this country.

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