

## Abahlali baseMjondolo position on the 'National Shutdown'

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1. Abahlali were not engaged or consulted by anybody or any organisation on the 'National Shutdown'.
2. Abahlali respects the decision of the EFF to call for a national shutdown given the crisis that our country is facing.
3. Abahlali does agree with some of the demands that are being raised - we are all deeply concerned about the collapsing economy, extreme state corruption, the energy crisis, systemic poverty, unemployment, etc.
4. However, the manner in which the organisers of the 'national shutdown' have promoted the event is causing panic and making ordinary people feel threatened, especially vulnerable minorities such as migrants. The tone in which the EFF Commander in Chief makes his call for a shutdown demonstrates too much anger and sounds to be inciting violence. South Africa is a country suffering from a crisis of systemic violence, and it is highly irresponsible for any leader to encourage more violence.
5. Abahlali's view is that there could have been better way to organise the action by appealing to all South Africans to join in a mass protest across political divisions in manner and tone that does not discriminate, that is uniting in the spirit of solidarity, that is peaceful and aims to build a just peace.
6. Abahlali rejects any form of violence and discrimination, and therefore we will not be participating in the 'National Shutdown'.
7. We reject the violence of the EFF. We also reject the violence of the ANC and that of the state. We are very concerned about the threatening language being used by the state with regard to the 'National Shutdown'.
8. The state uses everyday violence to govern the poor in this country. Both the ANC and the EFF are probably learning from the state. It is imperative that all progressive political forces clearly reject the normalisation of violence as we work towards a just peace.
9. This decision was taken at Abahlali General Assembly after a series of engagements with various structures earlier this month.

*This press statement was released by Abahlali baseMjondolo on 20 March 2023.*