

“Interrogating the roots of Afrophobia in South Africa and why poor Zimbabwean migrants in particular”

on the sixth of April.

Interrogating the roots of a phobia in South Africa. And examining why poor Zimbabwean migrants in particular appear to be the main targets. as a concept note

read and quoting a tweet which drew my attention. crime does not have a nationality. It not become a criminal because you are European or Zimbabwean. no one should ever say one is guilty. Cos of being from Zimbabwe. The way we have come to hate Zimbabweans. Where do we come from? As a nation. Do it other black people this way. This was said to be the former Chief Justice of South Africa. Mogoeng Mogoeng. But I think it summarises the topic before us. And And we have experts The fewer people vision on this matter. People who have been on the cutting edge.

of

previous xenophobic or atrophobic outburst in South Africa. we we we don't intend to indulge in emotional debate on this subject. Our purpose as scholars, as activists, as thought leaders is to help, educate our people. Across the continent. I was glad to come across a report Uh done by South African scholars. Entitled Scholars Weigh In on the Migrant Question. it was done by the African social

attitude survey and the Human Science Research Council official honoured to be a member of the board. The report is very interesting. It begins by saying the general public appeared to be misinformed about the impact of migration and how it affects the national labour market. Many of the main main anchored in an overestimation of the number of foreign born nationals in the country. End of quote. And I think this is important because it seeks it helps to answer some of the very angry. And a lot of anger out there. Um eh as I can quote the Minister of Home Affairs eh of South Africa. There was a lady the other day. I quote I am coming for them. And all of them are in jail, locked in and the keys have been thrown away. Then I'll step down. Only then. And someone commented a Zimbabwean. So he wants them dead or to rot in jail As I said earlier we don't want to indulge in polemics and and mudslinging. I think it's a the point has been made by the scholars have referred to. that much of the debate in South Africa on migrants is based on not enough. Information. And Stephen Gordon of the Moon Science Research Council. On April 14th. notes among other ah elements. The number of migrants or foreign born nationals in in 2019 in South Africa was four point two four

point two million. Or 7.2% of the population of more than 60 million in South Africa. And not the tens of millions, as being bent around in South Africa media. He adds no there's no evidence that international migrants are a major cause of unemployment in South Africa. The 2018 World Bank report states that for every employed migrant in South Africa two jobs were created for South Africans. However, most migrants are vulnerable. and the participation of figures in the labour market in South Africa is average of 10 to 12% per sector. Migrants tend to tend to 12%. Most are in the construction and engineering field, 12%, as per twenty17. Restaurants, bars, canteens, shebins, 10.6%. Hotels, camping, etcetera. 7.2% agriculture. farming January 11. 7. So the scholars conclude it is imperative that the country develops policies to tackle the challenges based on sound evidence. That they are implemented from this perspective. I think that is the purpose of our discussion today. To try and add shed light on this problem. And to help resolve it. So we have here Chipso Dendere. A young Zimbabwean scholar, professor at Welsley College in the US. But a regular commentator on home affairs. In Zimbabwe. and amazing for a person that that

far away. The amount of information she has at the fingertips. And it was her tweet. Uh to soon after Nyati's death that attracted her attention and led to this title. For this evening.

Welcome Chibo. Then we have Dale McKinley from the Copening Africa Against xenophobia. And again we'll ask Dale to introduce coupling briefly.

While Chipu will look at the question of why are Zimbabwean poor Zimbabwean migrants in particular? appear to the main targets. The deal will try and explain to us causes of phobia in South Africa. Last but not least we have Eleanor Sisulu who has kindly stepped in for Namboniso. Who apologises. Due to Eskom problems and lack of a backup for this evening. Um Nominiso. he's been on this platform before. And we hope that with luck she can get some power. And join us subsequently. But Eleanor Sosulu is a regular on this platform. She's a Zimbabwean South African. And as I was bossed and my niece as well so. that Eleanor has been involved in the many discussions. The subject. And I remember a passionate and emotional outbursts in previous following previous xenophobic, xenophobic attacks in South Africa. she has been on the cutting edge as I said earlier. And he's a regular commentator on these issues in South Africa. So on

that note I invite Chippo to open the discussion for us. Thank you professor. Igbo. Um and my sincere apologies to everyone. Uh my voice sounds terrible. I have a I have the worst cough that I've ever experienced. But I'll do my best to be here and present. So I thought about how to first have this discussion. A lot of our academic work over the last I think two decades has focused a lot on migration to South Africa. And there has been somewhat of a bias I think. Of just thinking about documented migrants or thinking about educated migrants. Um and that's not necessarily a bad thing. But I think over the years we've also missed an opportunity to study what's happening with what the international organisation of migration terms day to day migrants. But I'll take us back to the nineteen and the 1930s. Which is when we have early records of proper migration within the region. And particularly in South Africa because of the mining industry. At that point as many of you already know there was need for day workers, monthly workers that would come and work in the mines. So people were coming in from their suit to Switzerland. Now Eswatini. And then long term workers coming from Zimbabwe. Um and other parts. And for the relationship between the Zimbabwe and South

Africa people were often known as Mujubec. Uh in reference to their living in South Africa in Johannesburg. In the 19sixties, 70s, 80s you start to see more female migrants going into South Africa. Traders, many of them known for sailing for sailing doilies. Although that was not the only short term trading that was happening. But these groups interest me in reference to today for a number of reasons, right? The first being that a lot of these people tended to be medium educated, tended to be in the working class. And they were going to South Africa, spending time there, working in the mines, doing their trades, and then returning back home. And so that's what's critical as we think about what has changed. There's always been this long term relationship, this long engagement of migration between Zimbabwe and South Africa. So what has changed? Uh, Crush and others have a study that looks at three ways of migration between Zimbabwe and South Africa. And their study looks starting from the nineties. Then the period between two thousand and two thousand and five. And then the post 2 thousand and 5 era. And again slowly we were starting to see a shift. Whereas highly educated migrants had always moved right around the world with an intention to be there for a long time. Uh becoming

citizens and this is just not what we were seeing with this particular group of migrants at least between Zimbabwe and South Africa. Um so what I wanted to take note of is the shift that starts to occur after 2000 to two thousand and five. And most people will know that between two 000 and two thousand and five it's also the period where the economic decline in Zimbabwe starts to go down really badly. So then you are getting different forms of migration at the same time. You're getting the nurses, the doctors, the teachers, right? Who quickly become absorbed in the South African employment sectors because there was a need for nurses, teachers, doctors, all of these professionals that were needed because South Africa has now just gained its independence from an apartheid system that made access to education for black people very difficult. South Africa has also experienced an outward migration of white South Africans who had previously held these positions so there was this need, this formalised need for Zimbabwean professionals. So they go in and they fill into those sectors, right? And this is the migration that we've often talked about. What happened to Zimbabwean nurses, what happened to Zimbabwean teachers, what happened to

Zimbabwean doctors? But at the same time, you're also starting to see people that were not necessarily professionals, people that had been traders, people that had been in the informal sector. And now the difference for those people is that once go into South Africa now between 2000, 2008 and onwards, their chances of returning back home become slimmer. So now those people are integrating into the South African system, but in a very different and more complex way, than we had seen before. And they are settling in areas where migrants weren't necessarily settling for long term. So in the 70s and eighties, when you would have Zimbabwean migrants settle into Soweto for example, it was temporary. So they would settle there. They would do their trading. They would work in the mines. Wherever they were. And then they would return home. Because at that point what they earned in the runs was able to sustain their livelihood in Zimbabwe until the next return. But now you've reached two thousand, two thousand and 5. The Zimbabwean economy is spiraling. It's just falling, tumbling, right? So even if somebody is to leave and to go back with their runs, that doesn't last as long as you do. In my own work I've done a lot of interviews with migrants and again there's this bias even in

my work where I've mostly talked to people that went into South Africa. Maybe they were documented or undocumented. But they quickly found their way through the educational system to regularise their paperwork and then we qualified them under the educated migrant sectors. But for today I really wanted to focus in on understanding. So the tweets that I sent out that Professor Mandaza referred to was when I was asking when did Zimbabweans become the most hated immigrant group? And perhaps that was more emotional than I intended. But what I was trying to get to is where do we see this shift? Right? From early late nineties, 2000s where people are sort of thinking, well, Zimbabweans are coming in, they have the skills that we need, and we love Zimbabweans. We are friendly with Zimbabweans, etcetera, etcetera. But now, there's been this complete shift. And so one of the things we start to pick up on especially in the post Operation Muramachina era is that you're getting younger and younger migrants. Actually tracking into South Africa. From the border towns. Tracking into South Africa and then staying in South Africa. So you've got kids as young as 15. So obviously these children don't have any skills without. Right. So they are tracking into South Africa and they're

staying in South Africa. The second thing is that now we've got a generation of kids. The also being born in South Africa. So there are foreign born migrants. They're staying there. And this is not to say that well these are the people. This is why you know you've seen an increase in crime. We know that research especially on the US Mexico case. Where people are often raised the same issues of well why do we see more crime in places where they have migrants. The data has shown us an already professor Ibo Mandase has alluded to it that increased migration does not in of itself increase crime. it doesn't. But what I want us to pay attention to is what happens when you saturate places. Right. With a particular population that's already disadvantaged. And so this is what you start to see in the post two thousand and five era. Excuse me.

So in the post not only are you getting really young people. You're getting people that were working in the informal sector. Which means that they are also entering into the informal sector in South Africa. The informal sector in South Africa has never had a shortage of people. So now what we've done is that the Zimbabwean migrants into South Africa are saturating an a field that's already saturated, right? So you already had a lot of black

South Africans in the informal sectors. And so now you also have millions of Zimba coming in to join into the informal sectors. Then the other important thing is where are people going to settle? So we know from our network research, from our social networks, studies of people tend to go to places where they already know somebody. Which means that people were tending to saturate in smaller places. So the case study that I was looking at over the weekend was Soweto and and I'm and I'm using Soweto broadly here. So you could think of Soweto Plus Plus. So now you've got the same the the same demographic of people going into saturate into Soweto. Where the resources are already marginalised. The people themselves are already marginalised. Because the state hasn't quite figured out how to create opportunities for black South Africans in those locations. And now you've got double, triple, quadruple the same number of people. And the government is still not able to address. Well how do we take people in the informal sector and formalise those jobs? How do we make sure that people in the informal sector are earning enough money to support their families. How do we make sure that people that are living in these law developed places get enough housing for themselves? So when I did my field work and

it's been a few years now. One of the things that fascinated me the most when I went into Kailitcha for example is that people were being very creative. And you know these are neighbours that really liked each other. But there was a lot of creativity in how to create extra housing. So extra housing for the black South Africans that already lived in Khailisha but also extra housing to accommodate the new arrivals. And so what people were doing were to build plastic shelters in their backyard. And these plastic shelters would house 3 to four families. Right? And so the fault isn't on the people that are living in the plastic shelters. And it's not even on the landlords themselves. The fault was on the fact that the government made promises in 1984 on availing more housing and that was never done. And then as the situation in Zimbabwe deteriorated, it pushed more people out of Zimbabwe into South Africa and not just the the band of migrants that we're used to. But then all these other people too in the low income band in the low education band. In the informal sector band. And so those people found themselves especially in the Khailitha sector effect found themselves living in Khailitche in this plastic homes. And for me that was really puzzling because at

the same time that I was there there was a fire that broke out in one of the houses. Which raised fifty houses. Right. So one fire from one house destroyed about fifty houses. Again because this was about the the way that the houses were compact. And now you have more people living in those areas. And so when people ask, well, why are we seeing a lot of these problems in the same areas? And I think it's because well, you've taken the problems we're in Zimbabwe. Right you've taken people that were living whether it was in the Perry urban areas where you already had issues of low employment, low income and all the challenges that come when you have people living in those under those conditions. And then we've combined we've compounded those conditions in low income areas in South Africa. Where people are already facing low income, low access challenges. And now you have a triple factor or what we think of as a multiplier effect of those challenges. And so this has continued on right. And we kind of see spikes. Every time the situation in Zimbabwe deteriorates further, you see spikes in those same locals. Where people are like thinking to themselves, well, I'm still going to go to South Africa. I might live in a low income area, but the few runs that I make, are better than

what I would be making in Zimbabwe. And I also wanted to share some interesting data Um which is that we've been talking a lot about global migration and we find that only 2% of Africans actually immigrate outside the continent. About the majority of of of of African migrants migrate within the continent. And in particular what we we find is that at least 24% of African migrants are going into Southern Africa. And so what that actually means is that 24% of migraines going into Southern Africa are all going into South Africa. And so South Africa itself is a is a young developing country. Right. It's young. At the end of apartheid wasn't too long ago. It's very young. And so now it has this responsibility of absorbing all of these migrants, wonderful people, coming from different parts of the continent for many different reasons. Some of them are coming into join the formal sector, right? Filling in spaces that need to be felt in. Some of them are escaping war and other violence. happening on the continent. And and we know this right? We know that a lot of the refugees, even the ones that pass through Zimbabwe, they'll stay at the refugee centres in Zimbabwe for a short while. But often the destination in mind for most people is South Africa. So then South Africa is capturing all

of that. As the home for the continent. And because South Africa is young, because South Africa still has the same challenges of many developing countries, which is that in many developing countries you're going to see well not everybody is making the same amount of money. And when not everybody is making the same amount of money, you're more likely to see crime. Even if it's petty crime, but you're more likely to see that. You're more likely to see frustrations within neighbourhoods. So what does it mean then? If we take all these people and compound those factors in those lower income neighbourhoods that already exist. And so the reason they started here is because this conversation that's happening, where I think we've taken out South Africans in those neighbourhoods that are receiving a lot of the migrants. And we've taken their voices out of the conversation and dismissed them as anti-African, as anti-black. And we haven't paused to think well, wait a minute, let's actually think about this. What is happening? If the problems in Zimbabwe are causing everybody to run away from home, right? And when everybody has run away from home, it means that we're putting pressure in communities that don't necessarily have the bandwidth to even help the

people within their own communities. And now there are all these extra people that need to be helped. And the system is not strong enough. Yet to sustain all of this. And the good news is that generally when you have more migraines it can be good for the economy. But the the triple factor challenge for South Africa is that unlike the United States which is much older has a much bigger economy. South Africa has a smaller economy. It also has its own struggles with unemployment. And so now we've brought in more people that are joining into that economy. And need to be provided for by the state. And of course we know that the South African government like the Zimbabwean government and many others on the continent doesn't necessarily have a shortage of money. But sometimes there's a shortage of the decision to allocate resources. So then I don't know if many of you have watched the documentary Dia Mandela where the being asked in that documentary is, wait a minute, how come the elites are building mansions, but the children of Soweto, the children of Kailitha, are still living in this small, tiny homes. How come this was happening? And so, that's, that's a challenge that already exists for South Africa. And something that the nation has to deal with, right? The South

African nation has to deal with. And so, when you already have such problems, and then you have more people coming in, it in a way it makes sense that people looking from within their communities are going to place blame on the new arrivals. Even though those new arrivals have not necessarily exacerbated. They have not necessarily created new problems but that their arrival has just exacerbated things that already existed. I'm going to pause here partly because my voice is static to run out. And so we have time for the next speakers. Yeah thanks Chipu. Just before you what drinking your water, just two, two questions. One, if you could, if you could please explain the Muramba China for yes. So in and before also it's clear that you you have made the point that the the influx of young and younger Zimbabweans. into an already saturated informal sector in South Africa. Or the arenas in which South Africans are most disadvantaged and destitute. As as is part of the problem. Uh can you also say that really the problems, the the flash points are precisely those areas in which Zimbabweans are most present in South Africa. Yeah so first Bramatina. This was the cleanup exercise that the government started in two thousand and five. The Zimbabwean government. Where

they displaced almost a million people. And the idea was that most of those people would be moved from urban areas to per-urban areas or to rural areas. Which would you know benefit Sano PF but we're not talking about Sano PF today. But in fact what happened is that a lot of those people that were displaced ended up migrating into South Africa or emigrating into South Africa. And as I've mentioned before a lot of them were young. Um hadn't finished their schooling. So then that increased the number of of people in that demographic of of migraines. Um and then when I say that these people have moved into already saturated parts of the South African economy. Yes. And I think that's the heart of the challenge right? Uh is that if we're going to be that question is really And we have not we referred that in I referred to that in the in the concept note. Uh have not said very we have said very little so far in the discourse, even within the media, about the capability of the Zimbabwean state, for this. Uh, you made reference to, to, to, Mtamba, China, I think it was a very poignant point. Uh, at almost forgotten that, that was a major turning point. Uh, coinciding as he did with the decline of the economy at that time. But, you noticed the silence of the Zimbabwean state

ever the date of eh Elvis Nyati. Almost embarrassing and embarrassing silence. For a country Uh and all of us but in the state in particular. Uh for this mess that is in South Africa. This mess that we have caused in our country. And almost transferred the burden to our neighbouring country. What can you say about that? Why is a Zimbabwean state so quiet? And notice for example that Zimbabwean ambassador to South Africa. Was refused at a very hostile reception. At the at the work for Elvis Nyati. Uh I don't think they are quiet. I think they are surrogates are doing the talking for them. Uh there was a tweet from Nick Mangwana who's a spokesperson for the government. And in the tweet he said something very problematic. He said that this was just afrophobia. He said was about people that are not willing to address white South Africans and instead coming for black black Africans. And so in a way they are taking their rhetoric from Zimbabwe. And using that in South Africa. Uh and dismissing any responsibility on their part. Because if they really have to engage with this then they have to ask themselves why is it that this has become the dream of every Zimbabwean child to leave the country and go to South Africa. They would have to address that. But we know that in the past the the Zanuki

of government has also had a complex relationship with the diaspora. Um started off with you know Robert Mungame would make fun of people that were working in England. Uh who were working in care jobs right? Uh so and at the same time they also like the remittances that are coming. So they cannot say to people in South Africa come home. Because if everybody comes home then they lose this money that they have been making from remittances. This is something that been staying for a long time that authoritarian governments in particular benefit a lot from remittances. They benefit from people back home getting the equivalent of a paycheck without them having to create jobs. So now if millions of Zimbabweans return back to Zimbabwe they have a responsibility now to create jobs. To provide social welfare. To provide better medical treatment. Right now a lot of Zimbabweans will use South Africa as the first stop for medical treatment. This includes people that can pay for medication and people that can't pay for medication. So everybody is heading out to South Africa. If your relative is sick, most families are figuring out that it's better to find money to take them to South Africa than to scramble within our healthcare system. So if the Zimbabwean government

were to make a statement, they would have to do a number of things. The first would be to admit that, well, look, you have problems in South Africa because we have exported those problems. And that's just something that our government is not willing to do. The second thing is that they would have to have an action item. So what's the action item are you going to encourage your citizens to come back home? I don't think they want to do that. But even if they did that it would be very disingenuous of them. They would do it in a way of almost attacking the citizens that are abroad. And the third thing is well if your citizens come back do you have the resources for them? How are you going to support them? What's going to happen when you have of young unemployed people. What is the thing that the that becomes their job? So they are well aware that when you have millions, thousands of unemployed young people, it's going to increase petty crime. And we've already seen this happening in Zimbabwe. So they are well aware of that. That's why they are not offering to repatriate their citizens back. That's why they are not even willing to engage with the South African government. Because it would mean that they would actually have to do to go beyond the talking points of Nick Mangwane and others and to

make real statements. Uh and to offer real solutions. And we know that you know this is just not something that this government is prepared to do. And I make these statements in hoping that in some ways we provoke them to make statements that are meaningful and to take meaningful action. No thanks Chupo. Done a good job here. I will come back to you later. Uh hope you you have time to drink some water. Um well Dale McKinley is our next speaker. Dale I think we we have a a fair very good intervention from Chipu and I think she has highlighted sufficiently my view the capability of the of Zimbabwe itself all of a Zimbabwean state in particular. In the midst that we have in South Africa. Uh Personal you can come in Dale and make your presentation as you proposed namely to highlight the root causes of xenophobia and afrophobia in South Africa. Dale McKinley. Sure, thanks, thanks, Igbo. Um, and just before I start, just to give, for those of you who are not familiar with myself, I'm also a Zim South African Guerdo is my, my hometown, initially. Um, back in the day, and, I have been here in South Africa. Uh, since just after the release of Nelson Mandela and unbanning of the ANC in nineteen ninety of the last 32 years. and I come from an activist and intellectual background as

well. Uh both political and social activism and intellectual endeavor. Um so I am speaking on behalf of the Kopenong Africa Against xenophobia coalition. Uh for those of you who are not aware it's a loose collection of a range of different organizations, communities, NGOs, individual activists, migrant organizations, others who came together after the initial sort of uptick, the latest uptick in xenophobic violence and actions particularly around this operation Dudulla. Um which was targeting informal traders in particular in Alexandra and and Soweto more recently and then there was a feeling that there was going to need to be a more coordinated push back and voice and that's where Copenong has come from. It's not a formalized coalition in any way. It's simply just different activists and others coming together to try to raise a counter voice and narrative as well as to push back this rising xenophobic violence and and discourse. Of course, for those of you who know this is the latest in the many different iterations in South Africa of the same. I'm going to speak directly to and I've done much work on this in the broader context of the political economy of of South Africa and it's it's own sort of incubation of of xenophobic

tendencies which I think it's fundamentally important if we're going to understand the latest version or any of the previous versions It's fundamentally important to understand the structural nature of where we're coming from and what the roots of this are. Uh it's not simply conjunctural and it's not simply something that can be I take the points and I think they're important points being made with regards to the Zimbabwean situation but they're not delinked from the political and economic decisions that have been taken by the ANC in this country and by the South Africans in general since nineteen ninety-four. So let's locate some of those structural historical roots. Uh in in particular reference and when post the the 1994 South African state was formed as everybody knows out of a a negotiated settlement. Uh it's important to to to understand I think fundamentally that what much like in Zimbabwe what happened was the ex-national liberation movement in this case the ANC took control of an existing state that was built upon and a society that had built upon fundamentally people according to identities. Uh in racial identities, ethnic identities and other kinds but predominantly racial and ethnic identities. The Bantustan

system, the complete apartheid segregation and separation and so the apartheid space and place, what I call apartheid space and place has been with us for 30 something years. So, well, since now, post 199-four, 20 something years and has never really fundamentally been transformed in any way. Um outside of maybe some of the middle and upper middle classes and the deracialization of the elite sections and the upper sections of the economy and and in residential neighborhoods where those who can afford. Have been able to do so. But otherwise 19 1994 South Africa looks very similar to 2 0 and 2-two South Africa in terms of of apartheid space in place. And this is fundamentally important to understand in in the relation to the the nature of the the the xenophobic incubation. What did that what did that basically do? It married in some ways a nationalist politics. Uh in which the the fundamental sort of political legitimacy of the new ANC government had to come from construction of a new national identity. So from the apartheid into the democratic South African, there's no national identity, the South African national identity. Uh this rainbow nation, everybody is the same. But the fundamental glue is being a South and sorry there's there's

someone maybe that needs to be muted I believe there's a bit of quite a background noise there can someone mute mute yourself please? Thank you. So, that, that was the, the one part was, marriage of a nationalist politics, a nation building, alongside the embracing of economic neoliberalism, of a economic and social system, informed by neoliberal capitalist system that essentially accepted the status quo, the economic status quo. So when you marry these two things, a very narrow nationalism and a national identity politics, which is about loyalty to the new South African state, loyalty to the South African identity. And you marry that with economic neoliberalism. And a a situation sorry. Someone I'm sorry but it's very disruptive. Whoever has got their mic on please can you mute yourself? Or the host can you mute? Rico Rico. Speaker. Mikhail Mikhail Sorry about that deal. No, it's okay. Um okay. So, that's that's the that's the starting point. Um so, essentially, when the ANC came to power, after the the 19 ninety-4 elections, it took political control of an existent state. It had been built to secure the dominant interest of this new national is what I call in in in this case in this case, the only difference was the state was

now in the hands of a movement whose main aim was to secure the interest of a black nationalist as opposed to a white nationalist bourgeoisie. Although they came to quite similar kinds of agreements and in backslapping. So this this state centered changing of the Nationalist Guard, what I call a deracialized national capitalism. Um was, sorry, there's there's still somebody here. I think it's Ram Bisai. Ram Bisai Marufa, please can you can you mute? It's very disruptive. Thank you. Thank Um so the state changing of the Nationalist Guard was the this marriage of neoliberalism with the nationalist identity. Um in both theoretical and practical terms what this demanded was the creation of a dominant discourse of nation building. It's a means to politically legitimize the role of this new neoliberal policies as well as the place of those under its leadership. So in other words, what was being consciously constructed was inherently false, an exclusive nationalist identity in politics To be secured by political loyalty to a new South African state. Which claimed to represent the national will and interest. It's this macro nationalist paradigm. This macro nationalist frame married with a neoliberalism. Um that is the fundamental root of of xenophobia and and particularly

afrophobia as well later talk about. Um in in the context of post apartheid South Africa. Um so within this context that the South African state itself and the ruling party have constructed and fed the idea and practice of xenophobia in in general, an afrophobia in particular. And let's just remind ourselves at its conceptual heart, what xenophobia means. It means a fear of the other. With the other most mostly being defined by nation state membership. Someone coming from a different national nation. So here's the ultimate irony, of course, is that the contemporary post independence practice of xenophobia in South Africa has its roots in colonialism itself. In the in in the the nature of colonials, the the boundaries, the partake colonialism, the borders, the the the very essence of the colonial project, is in the DNA of, of the, of xenophobia. And of course, this goes fundamentally against all of the rhetoric about Pan Africanism and brothers and sisters, and solidarity, and liberation, movement, solidarity, and all the other kinds of of things that are spewed out by the leaders of this country as well as many others. Which are obviously in complete practical contradiction to that. So, since 1994, that that

construction of this of this
this roots of xenophobia, the
state has been remarkably
consistent in its contradictory
and I would call hypocritical,
discursive, and practical
construction of the xenophobia.
Um at the same time, the state
has also presented South Africa
as the new and natural leader
of the African continent.
Remember Tabo Becky's African
Renaissance. Um that we're
going to build Africa. At the
same time, of course, doing
exactly the opposite
practically in order to to push
that agenda. So, what am I
talking about in terms of
practical examples is the other
element is not just internal to
South Africa but it's external.
The South African state, when
it was confronted with
political and economic
situations in Zimbabwe after
the two thousand elections,
after the 2005 elections, after
two thousand 8, all the
different ones in the early two
000s and the essentially of the
Zimbabwean economy and the
creation of of of the essential
raping of this Zimbabwean
economy by Zanu PF and the
elites and cronies in in
Zimbabwe. What did it do? It
kept silent. It created
basically silent diplomacy. I'm
sorry. It's again the problem.
taking care of it Dale. I think
it's someone who just tells you
Okay. Michael. Miguel
Okay, I'll just, I'll, I'll

continue, sorry, it's just putting me off a bit here in terms of where I am, but, so, just to, to pick up, in terms of that, this contradictory discourse in terms of, of, of, basically, contributing South African foreign policy, political and economic foreign policy itself, contributing to the very conditions, political and economic conditions in a Zimbabwe, in a Mozambique, in other surrounding countries, because of its sub Imperial presence, in many ways, acting like the United States Acts in Latin America's backyard not necessarily militarily but economically and pushing its weight around and basically when authoritarian governments begin to suppress their populations and destroy their economy, they they don't say anything. They basically make sure that this is is pushed aside and the politics of of solidarity of Pan African solidarity and I say national liberation movement politics is presented as the as the fundamental sort of glue that binds us when in fact it has no practical content to it at all. So, these sub imperial presences across the Sub-Saharan African region have given rise very much and that's why I'm saying the South African government is not delinked from what has happened in Zimbabwe, from what has happened in many other

countries. Um and this is obviously, at the same time, that is created mass migration and and and political repression and economic desperation. It has been a boom for South African corporate capital Um at the same time in the region, people have been making many, the elites have been making lots and lots of capital and money as a result of the the misery. So, much like economic neoliberalism globally, we have imported that same model which is the fundamental freedom and movement of capital, the exact opposite for human beings. Unless you have money. If you have money, not a problem. You can buy your way into South Africa. You can buy your legality. You can invest in here. You can become a citizen. You can get your permanent residents. You can do whatever you want. If you're poor, Well, bad luck. Um and I think Cheap Boys is talked about the historical trajectory of that how after particularly 2000 that began to to particularly impact fundamentally on on poor Zimbabweans and others who are coming into this country. Uh particularly for economic reasons but also for political reasons. So the results of this these routes then have been multilayered in the last 20 25 years internally and there's more that have been put on there in terms of the root

causes of of this of xenophobia. Um so, the first thing, of course, is the fundamental mismanagement, malgovernance, corruption of the state itself in South Africa. And the two particularly state entities which have been fundamentally responsible, the Department of Home Affairs and the Police. Uh South African Police Services. Both of which are invaderately corrupt. Generally, indeterately incompetent. Uh in terms of actually in in employing the law on an equal basis. Um and It has been a very easy segway for each of them to basically then target migrants and particularly illegal migrants often times undocumented not a result of their own conscious acts but as a result of the finality, the bribery, the incompetence, the the complete dysfunction of the Department of Home Affairs, the shutting down of all the centers, the asylum seekers, the Zimbabwe special permit process. We can go on and on and on about how that has happened. And of course that has created and layered on to the situation and in order to try to cover that and to cover that incompetence and to cover that dysfunction. What's the easiest way to do that? They've learned from Donald Trump. They've learned from the they've learned from Marie Leten. They've learned from

others in Europe and others
which is you blame migrants.
You blame the immigrants for
for that. You you go for the
easiest, the most fear
mongering, the most you you tap
into people's in and economic,
desperation, and you blame the
most vulnerable in your
societies. The the ones that
have very little voice. Uh
because it's the easiest
target. And that plays well
politically with a particular
constituency. Particularly in
the ruling party which of
course at the same time is
completely and here's the other
side failing fundamentally to
deliver the basics to their own
population. So what is the
story of post 1994 South
Africa? Greater inequality
since nineteen ninety-four.
Greater inequal in our country.
Even more people out of work
than they were 25 years ago. A
greater economic desperation
and these are among poor and
working class black South
Africans predominantly. Right?
Not a and others. But its own
constituency the traditional
constituency of the African
National Congress and others
has been abandoned.
Effectively. At least
economically and socially. And
has been left to the devices of
of their of themselves and to
the vagaries of the the free
market. Uh which of course is
not serve them well at all. So,
what you have is you have what

I call constructed tension,
constructed prejudice,
constructed competition amongst
the poor. And as people were
saying, when you have a range
of people coming in who
themselves are economically
desperate, and they locate
themselves where within the
margins of economic margins of
society, in this case, South
Africa and formal settlements
and other places that
constructed recipe just gets
even more. Uh, should we say,
in many cases in deeper and
more intense and this is
exactly what has happened.
There are structural causes
here, structural explanations,
not simply as a result as I
said, a conjunctural
circumstances but things that
have been consciously planned
and consciously pursued that
have given rise to this kind of
xenophobia. Of course, then,
you also have the the
politicians who themselves, not
just within the ruling party,
but increasingly those that are
coming from other smaller
opposition parties, who have
caught on as they have other
countries that if they want to
play to the constituency the
the the desperate working class
of South Africa in this case
and the poor and workers in
South Africa if they want to
appeal to them for their
political support one of the
easiest and cheapest ways to do
that is to go after migrants in

this case. And Zimbabweans who obviously attend to numerically be quite large number of migrants in South Africa for obvious reasons Uh become a particular target. And of course because of where majority of them are located within these communities that themselves are so desperate and are so fed up with the government. So, what you have is you have the feeding of the xenophobia as well that follows election cycles, that follows the political cycles in in South Africa. As soon as their elections, particularly local government, what do you see? You see politicians starting to go after Gate McKenzie of the Patriot Alliance is the latest example in the in the next election, the last local government elections where this party out of nowhere, run by ex gangster basically got a substantial vote, a decent amount of of of votes, particularly within the so-called coloured community. Uh we're in playing against all of these nationalists and identitarian politics. And people's desperation. You also have the EFF which flip flops. Depending upon where the wind is blowing. Uh the EFF flip flops according note at some point it wants to pretend that it's Pan Africanist and it's with the brothers and sisters of the continent and the other one you have Julius Malema and

his lieutenants running around basically recently to businesses and saying why are you employing far workers and you must stop this and so forth and so on. Then you obviously have the others Operation Jadula, this latest young opportunist, Lux Lamini, who wants to become a politician clearly and many of these other politicians take advantage of this situation. So, that just makes, that just pours fuel onto the xenophobic fire and particularly the afrophobic nature which is what we're talking about. Of course, this is, for me, it's much more of a class issue in relation to the intra xenophobic explanation because as I said, if you're wealthy, if you're a wealthy Zimbabwean, not a problem. Not a problem to come into South Africa. If you're a wealthy Namibian, the elites of Southern Africa are all here. They all own big properties, most of them, including most of the Zanu PF elites, and most of the elites from the DRC, most of them from Namibia, from Angola, and everywhere else. It's the poor. And particularly, those that are forced into and have no choice into the spaces, those marginal spaces. So, for example, yes, you targeting of Somalian and Pakistani or Bangladeshi shop owners in South Africa to a certain extent because that's

where they've concentrated some of their economic endeavor. But for the most part what you have is you have the vast majority of of of migrants coming in who are poor, who are from other African countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Um who are on the short end of that state. Um in particular. And so that becomes a much more African centred and afrophobic kind of tendency as opposed to a general xenophobia which but the class nature of that is very very prominent in terms of of one's ability to integrate into the society and into the class society that that's professionally or otherwise. So, you don't find, of course, Operation Dedula going to Sandton and targeting banks where the middle management of the banks is predominantly Zimbabwe. If you don't, you don't find this happening. You find, they go to Alexander and target informal traders who is Zimbabwean or of other nationalities but predominantly Zimbabwean. This is the this the practical reality of how that plays itself out in the context of of the the South African xenophobic and afrophobic context. So those are fundamentally some of the the the historical roots that have been that have given rise to xenophobia and the the more contemporary forms that that has taken in relation to the

South African political scene
and other others as well. I
also just
to to mention a couple of other
things before I I wrap up. Um
which is that there is a we
talked and Ibbo was talking
about this misperceptions and
misinformation. So what has
also exacerbated this in South
Africa has been in particularly
in the last few years which we
didn't have fifteen, 20 years
ago, is the
you're an informal settlement
or whether you're living in a
mansion in Sandton to have a
cell phone and to be on what
app or to be on Instagram or
whatever it is, TikTok and
these other kinds of things and
to be able to share and to see
videos and postings and these
have been weaponized. As we
have seen in the US and as
we've seen in Europe and other
places. Um social media has
been weaponized as a tool to
advance particular class,
racial, political party
interests and others. And of
course when the xenophobes got
have gotten a hold of this they
have used
it incredibly well actually. Um
to just basically pour the fuel
even further. Because most of
the people that they are
targeting generally poor and
working class people themselves
do not have the tools
necessarily to go and be able
to verify facts and verify all
sorts of other kinds of things

that are being pushed around. People are just pushing a video. There's many examples just in the last week I can tell you. Where there are hundreds of videos going around. All of which are over ten years old. All of which have nothing to do with what's been happening in the last two or three months. But people see them and go wow. This has happened just yesterday and the misinformation goes. Or somebody says there are 16 million illegal immigrants. I was on a debate with the head of operation just the other day on SAFM. Uh one of the heads of the and she basically said there as a fact on national radio there are 16 million illegal immigrants in in in South Africa. Of course a complete lie. A complete fabrication. But this gets pushed. and then it gets taken up. So, the weaponizing of misinformation, of lies, of manipulated statistics, and other kinds of things has fueled that particularly among the poor and the working class themselves who then it just circulates and then creates this frenzy of of misinformation and people then move in that direction begin to actually believe and act on what is actually not true at all and has become a politics of, of, yeah, a politics of lying and a politics of manipulation, unfortunately.

So, this is the latest and another element to, to the construction of this, and to the roots of, of this. Just to end off, I mean, we're not going to, I'm not here to talk about, we can, if we, we have a little bit of time, maybe, about the things that I think, and the we as Copenong, think, can be done and should be done to try to push back ah, this very deep rooted, at very deep rooted, kind of xenophobic, afrophobic politics and and and actions in our country. Um but just to say that yes there are many different components to this. But the one thing that as Kopanam and and we are very very clear about and I think any of those who have been here in this country over the last many years fighting not just around xenophobia but around basic services, political political freedoms and expression, the crushing of descent, all these other kinds of things that many other people outside the country don't see. Uh the the news of the society have been increasingly strained and increasingly infictual Um is that these this kind of xenophobia here serves very particular interests. And it serves them very well. And this is why it keeps getting fed. In of course it's combined with the objective realities of people's desperation, inequalities, the constructed

nature of that historical
nature of those roots I'm
talking about. And the the
combination of these two
things. Um the economics and
the politics have come together
to create a very toxic brew in
this country which is
unfortunately something that is
not going to be uprooted
anytime soon. Um just as
precisely because those routes
go very deep into very very
specific historical, political,
economic, social, cultural
roots and are not reducible to
a policy issue or to leadership
or to a political particular
political party being in power
but to the nature of South
African society. I'll stop
there and thank you very much
for the opportunity to share
and to engage

Unmute. Yeah, thanks, thanks,
thanks Dave.

eh Mikhail, Mikhail, where are
you?

Yeah, thanks Dale. Just one
question. what is the what do
you understand to be the
position of the ANC? and the
state on the on this subject.

Why for example is the Minister
of Home Affairs making such
straddled if not also
self-confidence statements on
the subject such as I've quoted
at the opening of this
conversation.

Well, I think first of all,
that there is and always has
been a a fundamental difference
between what is said by the

political leaders of the ANC and what is practiced by the ANC itself as a political party. Uh that would apply to whether it's in in this case in terms of the the recent xenophobic violence and others. Uh and I would I would say that that's generally a a characteristic of the elites in this country. Political and economic elites. They want to be seen as being progressive, as being humanitarian humanistic, as being inclusive, as being Pan African, you know tolerant and so forth because that is a a politically good thing in in the larger context but in practice, it's a completely different story and so Ramaphosa is no different. Uh I would argue in terms of of this. He says a lot of the right things. And it's good that he says those things. He came out and said, you know, Operation Doula should not be doing what he's doing. It's criminal activity and so forth and we must not forget what the contribution of all of our brothers and sisters in Africa were in in the in the days and in creating the South Africa that we want. All of these are correct things. But when it comes to actually doing the activities that would need to be to address the thing for example like taking care of a xenophobic department of Home Affairs Minister Aaron Motwaleti who you quoted

earlier on. He doesn't do anything because he's more concerned and the ANC's always been more concerned with its own factional politics and its own positionality of its leadership than it has with anything else. So everything that gets through the ruling party, whatever it is, often times, gets filtered through its own factional politics and what's good and what's going to play well in terms of who's coming up. The ANC is going to have a congress soon. So, this gets also filtered through that. So, I would say that while it's to be encouraged and welcome that we encourage the more progressive elements of the national liberation movement whether they're in the ANT, others to speak out, to be consistent. Uh unfortunately, in the case of the ruling party, their actions often believing the rhetoric. Um and so it's necessary to go after those root things as opposed to saying that we can rely on a particular organization or particular leadership in order to do that. I just wanted to respond to a comment in the chat function which I think is a complete misinterpretation of what I was trying to argue and I apologize if it came across that way. But I see Panache is is basically accusing me of class reductionism of specific anti-blackness that informs afrophobia. Not at all. simply

trying to point out that I think I've I've I've properly and under understood the the the roots, the historical roots of this apaphobia within a whole range of different identitarian politics whether that's racial, whether that's class, whether that's ethnic and otherwise. What I was simply trying to say was is that when it comes to one's class status as an immigrant, it matters. That's what I was trying to say. So that it makes a a fundamental difference. Whether you are an elite from Zimbabwe whether you're an elite from anywhere else and how you get treated in this country As opposed to being poor. So, that is the nature of it and that's a reality. It's not, it's not any kind of my particular analysis. This is simply a reality. I wanted to respond to that. Thank you. Thanks, Ep. I'm not sure you can come in later. I will invite you. I will begin the discussion. In the meantime, I'm now calling on Eleanor. Sisulu. Uh to have the different task of speaking after two other speakers. But as usual. I've no doubt you can handle it Eleanor. Okay well they've made my task easier because I don't have to go too much into the historical causes. I may have some slight differences with Dale. In terms of the kind of I think the ANC is very divided. And there's

different strands. Uh but I do agree with him that there is a big difference between what he said and what he's practiced. Uh I was glad that Chipso referred to Operation Murambachina. Because I think that's that really has been ignored as a factor. And that's one of the crimes of humanity that you know we talk a lot but we don't talk about this recent crime which was very very professionally documented by the UN. of the forced removal of over a million people. Uh and it's it's quite shocking that that thing happened and the consequences to the whole region have been grave. And I should point out this Zimbabwean migration in Botswana, in Namibia, in Swaziland. Uh there are degrees of anti-migrant, anti-zimbabwean migrant feeling in those countries. But none of them have taken the form of violent attacks as in South Africa. And I think that is something for people for the scholars to look at. Why why is it I mean in Botswana there are legal measures and legal measures issues around immigration I mean issues around becoming citizens. Uh denial of work permits. There's a lot of measures. And when you think of it those countries have smaller populations. So if you talk about being swamped they have reason to be worried about

being swamped. I mean more reason than than South Africa. So I think the the regional the regional migration of Zimbabweans in those countries. And the responses in those countries I think is quite something that should be looked at. Uh the other thing I think I I think Chipu spot on in her analysis of young, unskilled Zimbabweans coming into populations that are already stressed. Have have not themselves seen the benefits of freedom are still in the shacks that they were in. and and don't see themselves as as as having benefited from the freedom of South Africa. So that is something quite important to note. But I want to talk about more the consequences for South Africa and I want to also talk about what has been done. And who have been the main actors in trying to address these issues. Uh I've put in the chat very substantive report by the UNHCR. Uh documenting their efforts to address this issue of xenophobic violence in South Africa. And I think one can say that the state has always been the South African state is split. The ANC is split. South African society is divided. Uh Thabo Mbeki once said oh South Africans are not xenophobic. And then there's others who will say oh South Africans are very xenophobic. And neither is

true. South Africa is a society that has strands of deep xenophobic violence. Um deep xenophobe be catered. And the reasons are outlined I think Dale has touched on them. Has touched on them. The legacy of apartheid. The legacy of always seeing being afraid of the other. And and that this violence is not only targeted at Zimbabweans. It's also targeted at at South Africans. At at internal migration. We also have a country which has has a history of extreme communal violence in the 19nineties. If you recall the black on black violence. And there was never accountability. There was a political accommodation. So the people that carried out those violence. Whenever made accountable. And I think subsequent cyclical cyclical manifestations of xenophobic violence. People have not been held accountable. So there's a culture of impunity. There's a culture of violence. And I think there's we talk about 2008 and we talk about two thousand and fifteen. But the UN report shows that migrants have been killed, attacked, targeted on a regular basis. So you you have these cyclical outbursts when it seems to be extreme but this has been ongoing. And I want to mention in the run up to twenty10. There were threat and it's it's

the same pattern that there's these threats that are upped by social media. Uh that went around that all all foreigners must be gone by the time of the World Cup. Uh in 2010. In the run up to the World Cup. And the South African Council of Churches at our request that was crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition and other migrant organisations. Um got together SACC convened all these organisations and brought in UA UNHCR approach in the representatives of the police and major attacks were averted. And I would say that the state was responsible at that time because this was a run up to the twenty10 World Cup. And it would have been the embarrassment would have been too big to contemplate. South Africa on a world stage and these attacks happening in the run up to such a major event. So and and I'm I regret that we didn't document what we did. And we didn't document the processes we followed to prevent this happening again. But one the take the lessons from that were one that you have these buildups. You have the threats. And you have civil society mobilisers. And the especially the faith based community mobilizes to stop the steam the tide and averts the attacks. And then after that and even organisations are even formed. Uh there was coalition against xenophobia. And we also

tried to get the SACC to have a permanent structure dealing with this. But then the the crisis is is averted and or the violence subsides and then there's a demobilisation. This time I think the scary thing is that the ANC is the power of the ANC is threatened. The ANC is facing very serious electoral challenges more than it has in in since coming to power in nineteen ninety-four. And sections of the ANCC are responding in a populist way just as the other political parties are. To this issue. Uh it's become an elect electoral issue and there's a populous response. And you you you have a Minister of Home Affairs who I think is just openly afrophobic. And he and that combined with with I think the what Deo pointed out social media being weaponised. I think this combination is is the perfect storm. And so we are in a very very scary Copenang Africa has been formed and I hope that it's you know it's an organisation that or not an organisation because it's not an organisation. But it's a network of social it's a social justice network. Which needs to be supported and which mustn't be demobilised. And we have to find ways of doing this going forward. For the protection of people. And you know there's a long term issues which we must look at. But I think the immediate thing of protection

of lives. One thing that came not in the in 2010 was that we need an early warning system. And civil society needs an early warning system. And I hate to say it but I I think civil society needs something along the lines of this Afro Fri forum. Uh a kind of prosecutorial investigative capacity. Because the state is not doing this. And and somehow that we we have to work on the immediate ways to protect lives. The longer term issues can continue to be worked on but the immediate things and I think copper copper nung and the South African Council of Churches and the faith based institutions who you know we didn't do enough to document what was done To prevent further violence and to protect people. And so those things need to be done. The accountability holding people accountable. Uh Because the impunity with which these things are done. And I I it's it's just, It's terrifying, I must say. And so there, there's just a lot of work and, and personally for me, I, I think the political parties are not going to, especially as we go into new election cycles, the political parties are not going to be helpful at all. And I think it's a civil society mobilisation, I think it's the strengthening of the social

justice movements. I think it's a building of Pan African solidarity, especially among young South Africans. And I've thought very much about this, because our generation has had and talk about Southern Africans, our generation in the liberation movement had exposure to the rest of Africa. And and a young South Africans haven't had this. And for South Africa there has to be a programme for South Africa to be part of the continent. Uh to see itself as part of the continent. And I really miss you Masekela on this one because he was really committed to this project and prepared to work and hold concerts and mobilise resources. Because he saw the dangers to South African society. And the consequences. We saw the last the last twenty15, when there was for the first time, a very strong reaction from the continent. Where even Madagascar refused to play soccer against South Africa. And I think these are the pressure points that we should as activists mobilising, work on. You know, in the, that, that was a seismic shock. That you, you know, the attacks against poor, vulnerable migrants who have no rights. Whose countries are not seen as protecting them. But when the continent responded The South African government had to take notice of this. And I think

there has to be continental
addressing of this matter. Uh
sadly our institutions I I I
can't even have polite words to
say about Sadiq. Because SADEC
has actually played
Miguel, can you help there? Can
you help?

Ah it's not on my side. I don't
know. You are muted. Eleanor.
No she's frozen. She's not.
You're frozen.

she must have lost power. I
think has lost power. To get a
back after the We'll get it
back later. In the meantime,
let me invite comments.

Let me invite comments. You
want to come in now?

Please put up your hands those
who want to make a
contribution. We have half an
hour of discussion.

Banashe.

And anybody else. We
have something to say. This
whole thing. I'm just looking
for my camera. Hold on for me.
to identify yourself

financially. Where you from?

Sure. I'll do that now. In the
meantime we can hear you.

Can you see me? Okay, cool.

Yes. Hi, everyone. My name is
Panashe Chukunazi. Uh I am a
Zimbabwean who was born in
Zimbabwe but grew up in South
Africa. I'm very much, you
know, identified with what
Chipso has stated with
regards to you know, those
waves of migration. I've seen
that over my lifetime as a
Zimbabwean South African. Um

and specifically you know, coming into South Africa with a very class deposition coming in in nineteen ninety-one and that the very seminal moment that we come in as the the daughter of you know a doctor and an accountant. Um at a moment where, you know, we have SAP and that kind of what you always speaking about, the absorption of professionals into a, transitioning South Africa. And specifically the moment that we come to, South Africa and particularly Durban, is the moment you are muted Vanessa, you're muted? Yes, somebody was muting me as I was speaking. But just to say that the, my, my introduction to South Africa is very much in the belly of that anti-black violence. And what is quite interesting over that period is then seeing that, you know, the first time I began to hear the word was, once we moved to and this was in the era of the, land reform, first of all, before even Murambatrina, in the media aftermath of land reform, we began to see, with my family now living in Bulukwane, and now White Beach becoming the most busy border across Africa. That's when we began to see sort of the influx of the so-called border jumpers. So of course I'm very much aware that there is a class difference between those of us who might be classed as expats who are

the professionals who could be absorbed into the South African economy versus those who were the so-called illegal migrants or rather the border jumpers. And that's the period where even as a young person I began to be very aware that there's something wrong with specifically being Zimbabwean at that particular moment being Zimbabwean was the laughing stock of Southern Africa at that time. And so of course there's a huge difference. The kind of physical security that I have as a Zimbabwean of middle class status in South Africa is very different than the gardener, the hairdresser. Many people that we have in our community. It's very very different. One of the things I I really think it's quite important. Um what mom Eleanor had mentioned is the question of why the violence. First of all to state that what is interesting in living in African going across the history. That South Africa is not exceptional in its anti-black rhetoric or it's anti-African rhetoric. We all know growing up or we all know from our histories people will talk about Mabrantaya, Manyasaran, that kind of thing. That particular kind of antipathy to other African migrants who've been brought in by the set of colonial economy. It's very much part and part of all of our histories. But the

question of specifically why the kind of nature of anti-black violence that we see in South Africa is something that really need to pay attention to. And thinking specifically about what kind of violence in years and saturate South African society such that this anti-black violence that we call xenophobia or we call afrophobia needs to be understood or linked to a broader spectrum of violence that we see in South Africa. And I think that's a really important dimension. This is not about about this is not to make abstractions about people's day to day. Um I think what mom Eleanor saying that was we need very much to focus on the kind of things that are going to respond to the fact that people's lives are being threatened today. At the same time we also have to have a long term perspective of what are the roots of this anti-black violence and how we're going to attack it because we're going to keep on going into the cycle for the next 30 years. I'll leave my comment here. But I think it's quite important to speak to the specific nature of anti-black violence in South Africa and how that been in years within the question of afrophobia. Yeah, I'm going to leave it for, for now, because I wish to have a dialogue, I'm, I'm not, thanks, thanks Vanashi, thanks

very much for your intervention. Um, Eleanor, if you want to come back, man, shut your **** up. In the meantime, I would they, we have someone from the economic commission of Africa, ECA, Carolina, Medina, and when you are ready to speak, you're most welcome. I'm glad you came in from the very beginning, to be nice to hear, from the global, from continental bodies such as as EC on the subject. Uh I have number of names there. There's Jana, Ngube, John, Larson, and in that order. Jana.

Jana. Thanks Ibbo. Thanks everybody. Thanks to the panel. Uh big shout out to Sis Eleanor who I owe a lot of things. I think for me two key things to contribute to the conversation Um number one. I think the world had a massive shock. Particularly I think in the two thousand and 8 expression of the Afrophobia that I think is being spoken about. And I remember the Mozambiquean man who was burnt alive. Being in the headlines of newspapers all over the world. Literally all over the world. Um when you think about what has just happened to Alex, the Zimbabwean man who burnt, got burnt in the recent spate of violence. And it's like you actually have to look for the news that speak about that particular experience. And my question being, what has happened to our conscience? Um,

around the world. Uh, is Africa, Southern Africa is it the issue of that because this is now a recurring issue. It's lost its media sexiness. Uh is it? Are we being drowned out? Uh by what's going on in Ukraine? But it's really bothered me about our conscience as a people. Um that such a a a horrific incident of violence happened so publicly. And when you contrast ah a similar incident 2008 and we see a really completely different reaction. And then the second thing I want to also speak into I think something that Dale and and and might have touched into as well. Is I think an issue also around the psych and the experience of violence within the South African community. Cos there was a talk around why is it I think it was talking about. When you look at other countries Botswana, Namibia, where they you know lack of love. Let me put it. For the Zimbabwean economic migrants. And that you don't see an expression of violence in the way that we see it in South Africa. But actually when we look at South Africa as a community and understand the levels of violence within that country. Sadly it's then not surprising. Um to see that violence which is many times exerted amongst selves now being exerted against the other as Dale put

it. And that's something I think that continuously needs to be worked on challenged to the South African state to have to really deal with the levels of violence we'd see in South Africa. Even amongst South Africans and this is what we see. The spill over for me for what we see happening towards Zimbabwean immigrants. And then the last thing I really want to appreciate Nchibo's intervention. Um and I think in your own questioning Igbo was really not taking away the responsibility of the Zimbabwean state towards fixing its own issues that affect its populations. Because at the end of the day when you look at the Genesis of a a a migrant workers in Zim. For me it didn't happen in the two thousand. Coming from the part of the country. Uh where the always was a sense that that part of the world is not integrated into the Zimbabwean economy. We always know that our big brothers, particularly brothers, and our mothers, sisters, when they just hit 18 or finished school, they were bought a jumpers and they were going to South Africa because that's where they felt the opportunities for them were more available compared to Zim. I think what then happened after two thousand into the Operation Rabbit winners event just opened up the whole country to perceive South

Africa and other places as an alternative. Thank you so much. Thanks thanks Jana.

Now

Dafazo. Dafazo. Uh let me unmute. Um can you hear me? Yes. Uh unfortunately I I sorry I won't put in the video. My internet is a bit unstable. Uh my name is Thafazu Watodo from the International Socialist Organisation of Zimbabwe. Uh currently in in Zimbabwe. And I've also been active with Koganang. Uh happened with Elvis was was very you know, shocking and scary, frightened. Uh, as a Zimbabwean in in South Africa. Um, and I also felt that it would give us more, I mean, the opportunity to interrogate other factors. And I can say I was equally disappointed with some Zimbabweans saying that should happen. So that Zimbabweans can go back to Zim and register to vote and then vote next year. I just want to highlight that when my daughter was here, in January She asked me, why is there pick and pay here? Why is there Lancet? She wanted to know. Those are some of the things that we are not interrogating. That for business, there are no borders. They can invest wherever they want. As Dale said, we've got the elite Zimbabweans living here, living large. And now because the South African government have failed to make its promise to deliver its

promises. It a blind eye,
putting the blame on
immigrants, Yet the blame is
not there. The South African
system is very violent because
of the gap between the rich and
the poor. That is the that's
why you see that apartheid
system was very violent,
educated, has been continued
with with the current
government and to make matters
worse, the South African
economy. it's a, it's a, it's
an imperialist country. It's
like a mini America that he has
taken business from others.
Those are the things that we
are not raising. And I was
disappointed that they left in
Zimbabwe did not attack. But
instead said they attack should
take place so that the
Zimbabweans can come back and
vote. We should now interrogate
the class person. The
inequality that has been caused
by the capitalist prices
That is the root cause of all
South Africa. And also in
Zimbabwe. Thanks Igbo. Thanks
Stefazo. Do you think that
there should be a kind of
responding? Do you think there
should be a response from the
continent? Including the AU and
the Economic Commission for
Africa. Uh it appears to be can
I what can I say? Uh reluctance
to confront the issues. Uh and
Eleanor made the point who
should have taken the lead but
there is nothing of the sort.
Uh I think there's need to

remind South Africa at at at
the regional and continental
level Of the the
interdependence between itself
and the rest of the continent.
You mentioned the Bonma shares
and the the Pick N Pays Cross.
I think soon the South Africans
public knows that that South
Africa depays very heavily on
on the economic relations with
the rest of the region and the
continent. Nothing that would
change would help to impact on
the kind of negative negative
attitude towards towards
so-called foreign Africans.
Carolina are you able to come
in? Carolina?

I hope but I saw Njozi, Njozi
you want to come in in the
meantime?

Munjozi

Anybody want to come in?
Hi doc. Hi there. Uh sorry. Hi.
How are you? My my my I was
struggling with technology. So
I I think that this is an
important discussion and
obviously I want to to
acknowledge the the inputs that
came from the panelists. I
think quite quite important.
Two things that come from me.
The first one is that, I think
personally, we are witnessing a
sad, tragic failure of
leadership. Uh, on the part of
the ANC, I mean right from the
president's to the refusal to
just take leadership. Because
first and foremost, the
anti-foreign sentiment, the
anti-African sentiments. Um, is

gathered momentum through social media and all these other platforms that I've created. And a few organisations like Dudula and Port South Africa first. But in many communities a lot of South Africans have always welcomed Africans and they are living with them side by side. We have a few communities where we have seen even communities resisting operation itself. Because it does not speak for the majority even though it appears they have won the narrative on social social media. But what I hoped to see was clarity from leadership not to appear to be using this for politicking, for electioneering. Uh you get a sense that there's a reluctance from the ANC that we can't stand on a principled position, on the basis that it might be what is popular and it might cost us an election. And I was wondering that, I saw a thing at yesterday or so, they lost And what? In the Northern Cape. To the and and so I'm just trying to say with regard to the positions that the leadership is taking on issues of principle that we expect more leadership. The second point doc that is worrying to me is the level of impunity. and corruption that is being promote ah impunity in the sense that perpetrators are not brought to bookwa at all. Ah the people that do these kind

of things, that organise, even that have meetings to instigate on xenophobia and stuff. Most of the time I have worked on this issue for a long time. And I know that in most cases the people who start the meetings will organise non Meetings are known. And I am sure the intelligence of this country would be aware of these things. But nothing happens to the perpetrators by and large. But also the level of corruption that we are starting to witness from the police. Uh even when where Minister Motswaledi will be at the border between Mercina and and Batebridge. And he says he has a roadblock with home affairs with the police and all these things In most cases, individuals are being made to pay 3000 rands or so, to be able to be let go. And police now are hunting Zimbabweans in these high density suburbs, in in Hillborough. A police van would just be hunting for foreigners for the purposes of getting bribes. And we see little action around, around these things. In terms of the way forward, my opinion, I think that people that are working on these these things, we saw what Kax is trying to do, which is commendable, and I think that we have to work more with communities on the ground try to roam in churches and community leaders. And isolate the perpetrators. Um, and, and

these kind of people that are organising around this. I, I think that it's an important aspect of what needs to be done. But also for Zimbabwe it's sad. Because the Zimbabwean government is completely absent. Besides the statements you see there is no effort to protect citizens. I had a discussion with with a few people at the consulate and a few people at the embassy to try to say what exactly are you doing when you keep quiet and all these things are happening. But also back home. The government that knows it has millions or hundreds of thousand of people that are outside Zimbabwe. Why would a government not want to protect its citizens? And and so you just think that the level of elite collusion in terms of not caring about the plight of those that are suffering. Uh the plight of the poor. Is really worrying. And at at organisational levels people like the AMC. Uh and those that fought the liberation struggle. You you just look at the lack of conscience and that we are witnessing and think that there is a fall from grace that is so sad. And disheartening. Uh but I think that we need to to work with communities. Mobilise young people. To really take a stance. Organisations like SASCO. And the other youth formations. I think need to to speak up. And behind the scenes

these are things that we need to hammer on and ensure that we we we get a grip on what's developing. Thank you. Thanks Mjozi. Thank you very much. Before I turn to the to the panelist. Thank you. Again I'm inviting Caroline if she's able to but I saw Carolina. Please come in and then Brian Kauma. Brian after Carolina will ask Brian Kauma. I saw I noticed he wanted to speak. And then I'll go back to the panelist beginning with Eleanor. Uh Carolina welcome please. Please introduce yourself. Uh Caroline. Can you hear me? Yeah I can hear you Okay, great. Thank you. Thank you very much for for the invitation and greetings from New York. I am Carolina Medina and I am here on behalf of the UN secretariat. Thank you very much for the invitation, Professor Mendaza and it was extremely interesting and enlightening in hearing the panel elaborate on the origins and consequences of hate speech and indeed hate speech is on the rise worldwide the potential to incite violence and undermine social cohesion and tolerance caused by psychological and emotional and physical harm based on xenophobia, racism, antisemitism and other forms of intolerance and discrimination. So in this context, education we believe can play a fundamental role to address

hatred both online and offline and help to counter the emergence of group targeted violence of course rooted in structural issues. The panel mentioned. So this is something that the UN has under its radar. And we are trying to tackle it through the sustainable development goals to through the education 20 30 agenda. Um a number of campaigns and advocacy initiatives. Eleanor mentioned the work of UNHCR in this work stream. Um so we just came here with with the willingness to to listen and to hear from you, the experts about your specific and local and regional experiences and knowledge. So, just thank you for the opportunity and and for this very very timely conversation. Back to you. Please don't unmute me at all. During discussion. Uh thanks a lot. Uh Brian Comb has changed his mind. Um so I will now go to the panelist. Beginning with Eleanor. Uh Dale and last but not least Chipo. And Eleanor please. Okay. Ja sorry. Ja the tyranny of Capcom. Okay. So I I just want to talk about a couple of mobilising things. One I was talking about South Africans who had the special permits. Who are now in the process of having their documents removed. The permits taken away. And they are having and these are skills Zimbabweans. Uh lot of them

self-employed. Uh lawyers, accountants etcetera. And their banks bank accounts have been closed. And some are planning to return home. So I was talking to one of them who is returning home. Who had been planning to go home anyway. And the Zimbabwe government is imposing a tax I think of has to pay 14% of the value of his goods that he's bringing. Now if you imagine bringing a vehicle home and you have to pay 14%. You are already forced to leave South Africa. Because your permit is being taken away. So you're being squeezed out And at the same time it's been made unaffordable for you to go home. So just as one point of activism, Zimbabweans should be active about this and say Zimbabweans coming home should not have any taxes imposed upon them. They have already been paying remittances. The government has benefited from the remittances. There's no earthly reason why they should be taxed coming home. So that's one thing. Uh second thing is that I just think in South Africa the support for organisations. For the initiative. Uh that it remains. It doesn't demobilise when tension subside. It needs to be built as a strong network and that we should support it. And that we should support a programme that enables young South Africans to have exposures. Young progressive

South Africans. Uh especially from poor communities. I I remember being sent by my relative Ibbo Mandaza when I was working for the Ministry of the Labour in Zimbabwe. Against my will to Senegal as as with other young Zimbabweans that were sent to Senegal and I think Ghana and Nigeria. And it was a truly transformative experience for me. And it enabled me to see the settlers state and special apartheid of Southern Africa. In a totally different light. And I can say me a pan African identity. And that's an experience I would really like for young South Africans. South Africans know I mean the knowledge of the rest of Africa. The lack of knowledge is absolutely shocking. And this is something you know we can talk about anti-xenophobia programmes. But I think we also should talk about a pan African project. And a Pan African project that is also linked to employment for for young Africans. I mean people worked in the anti-apartheid movement over many in many countries. You know people talk about put South Africa first and I think that's a history. The counter narrative that we should be creating or or impressing that the world puts South Africa first. Africa puts South Africa first. So it's extraordinary for South Africans to be even talking about put South Africa

first. In this chauvin
exclusionary manner. So there's
a count a whole counter
narrative project that we have
to work on. But the immediate
thing I think is really for to
to support networks which can
work on a continuous and
ongoing basis to address this.
I think for Zimbabweans also
this issue of operation
Murambatrina and what happened
to people. It has just been
dropped. It's it's like it
didn't happen. And I think you
know definitely the the region
needs to be reminded. The
country needs to be reminded.
If you recall there was a
report done by Anati Bajuka.
The Tanzanian at the time head
of UN Habitat. And that report
was just completely ignored.
And I think we should
resuscitate this because it's
about the human rights of
people. Yes we can talk in the
long term about and we can have
our political critique and we
can criticise And and look at
the long term measures. But I
think really the human rights
of people in the short term
right now. We need to work on
some of these programmes. Uh
thank you. Thanks Eleno. Uh
thanking you later. Uh Dale,
are you still there? Yes, yes I
am. Ipo. Your last words on the
subject for today at least?
Sure. Okay. Uh so much to talk
about. I I wanted to just pick
up a couple of things. I think
it's in relation to the more

sort of organizational mobilizational countervoices and counter movements because I have personally like Eleanor been involved for the last 20 years ever since the first sort of xenophobic activities and violence started surfacing in our in in South Africa. Uh in trying to respond to these in very different organizational ways. And I agree that you know a lot of it has been fairly reaction oriented in terms of the the the particular upsurge in in incidents and then it dies off when things move away. Um and I think the the one thing that needs to reflect for those of us who who are here in this country is the the general weakness of South African progressive civil society itself. The unions in this country are in crisis, generally speaking. Uh, and the, the general nature of community organizations, social movements that used to exist is also a shadow of its former self. So there's a lot of work that needs to be done in South Africa itself, amongst progressive activists, amongst movements, particularly the churches. Just let me give a very disappointing example recently when Copenong marched here in Johannesburg after the you know against the and against this and we we approached the South African Council of Churches. We asked them to send some of their

leaders to to front the march.
Um we were afraid that
Operation was going to create
some violent incidences. We
wanted to have a a as many
people there as possible from
as many different
constituencies. And their their
official response of the South
African Council of Churches was
sorry we can't participate in
your march. Uh we don't want to
take too much of a public stand
at the moment on this. I was I
was taken aback. Um
nonetheless, the point, the
larger point being that I think
those of us here in South in
South Africa have a lot of work
to do to to maintain and and
create a much more permanent
voice and would plead to others
and many in Kopenong, there are
many many Zimbabweans, many
many people from other African
countries and some obviously
from internationally and if it
truly internationalist
collected. So, we are here.
We're trying our best but with
very limited human and
financial resources but we're
we're we'll be doing that and
the other thing is to say on
the positive side and it's
picking up from a couple of the
other comments about that we do
not believe fundamentally that
the majority of South Africans
are xenophobic. Uh that that
harbor these things. And in
fact there are many many
different examples of
communities that have gone in

the other direction. The classic example in Johannesburg being Chembalichle which is just to this to the south of Soweto. Uh where they have managed in many different ways to come together. So, our approach here is a counter voice and a counter movement. Education, direct action, constant pressure on our own government and and and a struggle to implement the basics here. It's a it's a wide ranging struggle and to say that we're up against the issue of violence and the trauma in the society is so so deep. Um the availability of weapons in South Africa incredible. I can walk down my street here in my community close to the CBD and I can pick up an AK 47 for 1, 000 rand. Not a problem. Um just right here. So we have a lot of work to do in terms of addressing some of the very deep seated as I mentioned structural and social problems. We're doing it as best we can and I think we ask all of those who are both inside and outside Africa to join us in that in that struggle. Thank you. Thanks Dave a lot. Chipo, do you still have a voice? Have you lost Chipo? Chipo. Sorry I was having some tech issues. What was the question? It's your last words on the subject. Uh we are winding up. Oh yeah. You're the last you're the last speaker and just off.

I forgot to ask the other participants the other panelists. If there any chats which require addressing please go ahead and do that. I think one of the things that everybody has mentioned so far that I hadn't talked about is the psychology of violence in South Africa. And I want to be careful that the implication here isn't that South Africans are more violent. But is that this is a society that lived through a very violent form of colonialism for a very long time. I think unlike our settler colony where in some ways the violence when it did occur was removed from neighbourhoods. Apathy it was constant violence on people. And I was thinking of something my mother said. Um a mother who was a trader in South Africa starting from the seventies through the eighties. And she would say she would comment on the constant harassment of people that she noticed in South Africa through the authorities. Uh that was very different from what was happening in Zimbabwe. And even though you know according to official terms South Africa never experienced a civil war. It's a country that's experienced constant civil unrest. And so I think that shapes the way that people interact with each other. Particularly the way that poor people or people that are

excluded from the economic sector's respond to each other. I also wanted to say I think there's a role for the middle class. Uh the Zimbabwean middle class and the South African middle class. Where there have been outside of these conversations and only making comments here and there. But I think if the Zimbabwean middle class the many Zimbabwean professionals that are working in South Africa. If they were to once in a while share their voices about the politics, about what's happening. Maybe that would do a lot to change the conversation, the way that people feel about each other. And I'll give a specific example. I thought a lot about this when Doctor Cindy Vanzil passed away. There were so many wonderful comments and outpouring of love from both South Africa and Zimbabweans on the person that she was. On her kindness, her willingness to assist people everyday. And so what occurred to me is, look, here's a Zimbabwean, and she has, you know, the heritage of both countries. And so if people can see her humanity, how do we translate that into the way that we see the humanity of each other in our neighbourhoods? And so I think the middle class has a role to play here. The middle class often says that, oh, you know, we are beyond politics. I've also been asking my middle

class friends in South Africa, what they think about, you know, these events, especially after the unfortunate passing of Mister Nyati. And most of their responses are, oh, you know, but this is not going to happen to us. And I think this is precisely why things keep happening in poor neighborhoods. Because those people that are living in Sandton, in four ways, in Beachview, in Tableview. In all of these nicer place keep saying well that's not our problem. Well, if you're a black person living in South Africa, who understands the history of that country, how is this not your problem? How is it not your problem that people are living in squalor when the majority, when some, when a small minority has so much land, how is this not your problem? So, I guess I want to end there and say instead of us thinking about this as South Africans have a problem issue. I think we have to think about it as these are the challenges that black people are facing. Rooted in colonialism, rooted in apartheid and finding strength in failed governments, in failed post independence governments. And how do we as a people, particularly, the middle class, how do we contribute positively to a conversation? How do we push for more equity? Because if there's no equi if there is no

redistribution of wealth. If people are still living in poverty, then guess what? More people are going to get burned. More people because people's anger, I think someone said on Twitter that, look, when people's electricity goes, they're going to take out their anger on someone they think stole a copper wire. And that's their neighbour. So for as long as people are living in Square, and so for as long as black people in South Africa are suffering. we are going to continue to see this violence. Right? Because anger will manifest manifest itself in violence. And for the Zimbabweans on here, you know that our country is not safe from the violence as well. We're starting to see bubbles or violence entering middle class Zimbabweans. You've got people getting hijacked all the time. It's not because people are naturally bad people. It's because there's poverty. There's bad governance. And there's the middle class that consistently chooses to say that's not our problem and we don't do politics. So those are my parting words. Thank you Professor Igbo for this and I'm sorry that I've been in and out just because my throat is really burning. Well thanks thank you formerly at the end of the thing. I just want to before I I close the session just to say that the there have

been some interesting interactions behind the scenes. One of which is eh from my brother and comrade Paulo Jordan. Some of you will know him. And a scholar but also eh ex-competent of the South African struggle. He says I quote these are the dangerous situations that Sadiq organs should be addressing. Our TV news ought to have taken this up years ago. Thus far it seems it is South Africans who are to who are at fault. I'm in this to blade Nzimandi, another brother of mine and the Kosatu, general secretary. So there is some concern there, eh, there's not just eh, think that the as Erin says, the ANC is divided, but generally those who have been in exile, I've, I, I quickly embarrassed at what is happening. I just want to highlight the points made. Eh one is Chipso's reminding us of of the Mlambo China eh 2thousand and five and Eleanor, and, and Eleanor has made reference to Tibayuka report, eh, Tibayuka incident was one of my students in Dalaslam. Eh, that report has been forgotten, eh, and I think we should raise it from the, from, from the, shelf, and make it a point of discussion. Next time round. Eh, I was concerned and particularly concerned about Eleanor's reference to the returning Zimbabwean tax. Mister this this is really insensitive of of this

government in Zimbabwe. Uh to add salt to the wounds so to speak. I was in South Africa two weeks ago and I was pleased to meet the middle classes that Chipo refers to. Uh cross-section of them. They are very concerned about what's happening. And they're preparing a document submit to the South African government. On how to begin addressing the problem of Zimbabweans in South Africa. And and we eh let's say we service trust and in conjunction with the HSRC and also the eh school of government where visiting professor. We are commissioning a a study on the structure and content of the Zimbabwean diaspora. Not only with respect to bringing more information such as eh other scholars have done. Eh like those have referred to. Eh that have written And and sought to inform the public about the reality of the migrant situation in South Africa. But also in with respect to Addressing our own problem in Zimbabwe. Uh where we have 70 to 75% of all skilled and professional Zimbabweans outside the country. It's a serious matter. While it is true that we have contributed immensely. Uh Zimbabweans to neighbouring countries. Especially in the health education sector. At the same time when you have a 7 to 75% of your most professional

enabled and and skilled people outside the country. It's a major debt. On any efforts towards development in a in a country. The point has been made of the role of civil society. And we thank Yeleno and Dale for the work they are doing. In this regard for 20 years. Or more. And of course the role of regional. We have to keep prodding. And and and pressurising Sadiq. To wake up. The AU. And global organisations and I have to thank Carolina. For joining us. making the comments that she made. But above all I want to thank our three panelists. Chipu. You are most prepared for this. And indeed Dale wouldn't know you until today. And the your term weaponising of of misinformation. Rings in my mind. Forever. And I don't know as usual. Passionate. And no engaged with this problem. Thank you very much. Until we meet next time and thanks to all of those who joined us. My brother David Johnson from the Caribbean. Uh the Mukadenge, Michael Mamu in Malawi. Our in Zambia, Natricia McFadden in Swaziland, Swatini, sorry. Uh I must be careful of what the word the terms I use. Some people are some countries have become independent recently. Um thank you. thank you and and goodbye. Thank you. fuzzy of Watilio.