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PO BOX 31219 BRAAMFONTEIN, GAUTENG, 2017
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PRESS RELEASE

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Iranti demands action on attacks on the LGBTI community

Iranti supports the LGBTI community of Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape in their quest for justice for murdered Andile Lulu Ntuthela and their efforts to demand a society that values the lives of all people.

The remains of Ntuthela were discovered this week in a shallow grave at the house of the man who allegedly murdered Lulu in KwaNobuhle in Uitenhage. The man charged for his murder appeared in court this week.

The Nelson Mandela Bay LGBTI Sector held a community meeting in KwaNobuhle in Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape on Thursday April 15, 2021 to strategise on how to combat gender-based violence against LGBTI persons.

At the meeting, community members said police did not take LGBTI cases seriously and they were often told that cases were closed when they followed up. Community members pointed to poor investigations and a lack of sensitivity among police offices when dealing with such cases. The community resolved to have a meeting with the station commander next Tuesday.

Sibusiso Kheswa, programme officer at Iranti who attended the NMB Sector meeting, said the shock, fears and anger of the community are being transformed into tangible actions, and the presence and participation of non-LGBTI community members show hope and solidarity.

“Iranti is angered by the attacks on LGBTI persons around the country. We call on the government to work together to ensure justice is served to the families of those who lost their loved ones. We must do much more to ensure that such cases are prevented and where they do occur, are dealt with immediately,” Kheswa said.

“Many of these cases are closed by SAPS and the NPA without thorough investigations thus sending a message that LGBTI lives don’t matter. The continuous under-resourcing by the department of justice in strengthening the work of he national and provincial task teams further entrenches this belief,” Kheswa said.



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This comes after the murder of Sphamandla Khoza, a gay man from Inanda in Durban who was brutally murdered in a suspected LGBTI hate crime. Nathaniel Mbele, known as Spokgoane, was found stabbed in the chest on 2 April in Tshirela, near Vanderbijlpark in the Vaal area of Gauteng. In March, the body of a lesbian woman, Nonhlanhla Kunene, was found lying near a primary school in Pietermaritzburg after she was raped and murdered.

The Irantí team also joined community members at a night vigil in remembrance of Ntuthela in KwaNobhule on Thursday (April 15). The community chanted struggle songs on the street Ntuthela lived on.

Irantí has extended condolences to the families and communities who have lost their loved ones through such violence.

As part of its efforts to identify persistent trends of violence, Irantí started testing a reporting app late last year. Margin to Mainstream is a data-gathering tool used by Irantí to identify cases of human rights violations against LGBTI persons in Gauteng, Limpopo, North West, Eastern Cape, and KZN. The App aims to capture human rights violation cases towards LGBTI persons within South Africa and is being used to monitor and report on the government's record in the protection of LGBTI persons.

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