

Statement on Recent Episodes of Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

The Brazilian Anthropological Association (ABA), through its African Studies Committee, Migration and Displacement Committee, and Human Rights Commission, expresses its deep concern over the recent episodes of xenophobic violence targeting migrants and refugees in South Africa.

Recognizing the shared histories and deep connections that have long linked countries across the Global South, we express our deep concern over the recent episodes of violence in South Africa.

Migration and human mobility have long been integral to world history. Xenophobia, regardless of its origins or context, constitutes a serious violation of human rights and undermines the fundamental principles of human dignity. It threatens democratic coexistence, disregards diversity, and erodes the foundations of pluralistic societies.

South Africa's history illustrates how different forms of discrimination and exclusion have produced profound social, economic, and political inequalities. Contemporary tensions surrounding migration and access to employment, housing, and public services must be understood within their broader historical and structural context. Under no circumstances, however, can such tensions justify violence against migrants and refugees.

Within the South African context, a growing body of scholarship has drawn attention to the specifically Afrophobic character of these forms of violence, which disproportionately affect African migrants and refugees living in conditions of heightened vulnerability. Such violence is expressed through practices of surveillance, intimidation, and restrictions on access to public services, particularly in the areas of healthcare and education.

The Brazilian Anthropological Association reaffirms its commitment to the defense of human rights, the protection of vulnerable populations, the free movement of people, and the fight against all forms of racism, xenophobia, and discrimination.

We express our solidarity with the victims of these acts of violence and with the affected communities, as well as with the scholars, civil society organizations, and South African institutions working to promote dialogue, social justice, and the protection of fundamental rights.

At this critical moment, we underscore the importance of strengthening public responses committed to protecting life, confronting violence, and fostering societies grounded in respect for diversity, equality, and democracy.

Brasília, July 6, 2026.

Brazilian Anthropological Association (ABA); its African Studies Committee; its Migration and Displacement Committee; and its Human Rights Commission