

17 July 2011

Abahlali baseMjondolo Press Statement

The Kennedy 12 Will be Back in Court on Mandela Day

We wish to remind all our comrades and friends that we will be back in court, for the third part of the trial of the Kennedy 12, on Monday 18 and Tuesday 19 July 2011. You are all invited to join us at the court.

While the rest of the country and the world will be celebrating Mandela Day by remembering the struggle of Tata Mandela we will be celebrating our daily Mandela Day in court where we continue to face state repression in the third year since our movement was attacked in the Kennedy Road settlement.

A true honouring of the spirit of a comrade is not only to remember the struggle of that comrade. It is also to bring the spirit of that comrade into the struggles of today. We think that best gift for Tata Madiba is that we are still trying to complete his work of fighting for Justice and Human Dignity. This trial is our prosecution. It is part of a long persecution for what we stand for. What we stand for is a clear and firm instance that everyone counts in our society. This long trial is part of the price we continue to pay for moving out of the order that oppresses us. We invite all Democrats to join us in this dangerous journey for land and freedom.

Our comrades must be reminded that we were attacked in Heritage Month while we were busy dancing iMfene, playing soccer and enjoying other traditional entertainments. We are going to court during Mandela Month. We don't enjoy the so called "freedom" that we are always been told to celebrate. We remain poor and when we try to organise ourselves we are confronted with violence from the party and the state.

The attack on our movement in 2009 is similar to the attack on our protest march of 2007 in Sydenham where we were attacked by the police and the Abahlali 14 were arrested. After the 2009 attack 13 people were arrested. The 13th comrade's charges were dropped after spending 3 months in prison for absolutely nothing. We were not surprised by this. This is what the state can do. It can take you out of your home, away from your family, away from your work and lock you up for three months in a place where you are regularly beaten. It can do this to you with no evidence against you and with no apology. No one can deny that we do not count to this society.

The trial will be held at the Durban Regional court on the 12th floor in Y court at 9am.

For more information please contact:

Abahlali baseMjondolo office on 031 304 6420
Mnikelo Ndabankulu (Spokesperson) 081 309 5485
Bandile Mdalose (Secretary General) 071 424 2815