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Dear Ms Du Plessis

Re: Submission relating to objective 3 of the Grocery Sector Market Inquiry:
The impact of the dynamics of competition between local and foreign national operated retailers

1. Particulars of the participant:
   My name is Vanya Gastrow. I am a PhD Candidate at the African Centre for Migration & Society, at the University of the Witwatersrand. My research is based in Cape Town and focuses on the conditions of foreign migrant entrepreneurs in South Africa.

2. Contact details: Email: vgastrow@hotmail.com, cell: 082 685 1332

3. Summary of the issues addressed:

3.1 My submission relates to paragraph 83 of the statement of issues, i.e. understanding ‘the dynamics of competition between local and foreign national operated small and independent businesses in order to determine if there are any factors that may:

83.1. distort, prevent or restrict competition; and

83.2. have a negative effect in achieving the purposes of the Act’.
3.2 During the course of my research I have come across informal trade agreements between South African and foreign national spaza shopkeepers that have the effect of distorting, preventing and restricting competition.

3.3 These agreements are usually entered into in response to mobilisations by South African traders against their foreign national counterparts in the form of threatening letters or leaflets (see Annexures 1 to 4).

3.4 South African spaza shopkeepers and South African conflict mediators then pressure foreign national spaza shopkeepers to enter into informal trade agreements that are anti-competitive and discriminate against foreign nationals.

3.4 Such agreements have been entered into in Masiphumelele (Annexure 5), Khayelitsha (Annexures 6 and 7), Gugulethu (Annexures 8 to 10), Mbeweni (Annexure 11), Bisho (Annexures 12 and 13), and Motherwell (Annexure 14).

3.5 Somali spaza shopkeepers also informed me that they had entered into informal trade agreements in the Strand, Kraaifontein, Philippi East and in the Saldanha Bay area.

3.6 Agreements tend not to last very long as they are difficult to enforce. As a result they frequently give rise to further conflict and disputes.

I would be very happy if the Commission would consider these agreements as part of its market inquiry into competition dynamics in the grocery retail sector.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

Vanya Gastrow
PhD Candidate
African Centre for Migration & Society
Att: All Foreign Shop Owners (somalians)

Re: Close your shops

We send this communiqué to you as business companions that you must close your shops as of 25 August 2008 to 14 September 2008. Within the 21 days from the date mentioned you all have to ensure that your shops are closed until further notice.

The business, political and community leadership of Khayelitsha is currently engaging with each other in finding a solution for the influx of your shops into our communities.

Therefore we order all of you to close down your shops whereas the 21 days applies as a period of concern where all matter regarding your existence in our communities are being discussed.

For further information about this communiqué, you may contact us at the numbers above.

Regards

S. Citwa
Chairperson
6 June 2010

Dear Sir or Madam,

The business people of Blockombos and Mallecedene and the Sanco Community are desirous of all the women and men people must not buy the other groceries they must sell that one which is in their shop's and no one that proposal is start tomorrow on Monday and next week Monday on 14/06/2010. They must pack and go.

From committees.

KHULANI SMALL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
12962 LUPWANA STREET
Mhlati abhekileyo

Nhinywazwa ngumuntu oqosentla ukuba
indlwemene kwintlanganise ezakhe sekweni yase Pstile

Umla ugu 07 May 2011
Nesha ngu o 14:00 (2:00) ennakemini
londawo lile Pstile

Umba: Ushishini lwenehlile nezinye izinto.
Senzijwa yintebenhuluwe yokho

Yours sincerely

T.F. Tobigunya
Dear Commander,

RE: Confirmation letter to visit the shops of the Somalis in Lower Crossroads

This Confirmation letter serves to inform the Police Station that today on the 6th of July 2011 at about 11:00h, the following structures that is SANCO member, Lower Crossroads Business Forum, the Area Committees Member and the owners of these places where these shops are operated, will be assisting the owners of these shops of the Somalis to inform them after the resolutions taken from the previous meeting held that at the end of June 2011, they were ordered to stop the operation of their shops, and at the end of July 2011, they may close their shops completely and open their shops out of Lower Crossroads as they agreed from various meetings.

Hopefully this Confirmation letter will receive your goodwill.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

T.F. Tobigunya

Cell: 078 335 941 / 079 091 7946
ciska verster

FIVE armed robberies aimed almost exclusively at new Somali shops in Masiphumelele have sparked fears amongst refugees that a repeat of last year’s violence might soon follow the crimes.

Four armed robberies occurred in the past week alone, all of them at shops owned by Somali nationals. The modus operandi was similar in each case: two men would stand guard at the entrance to the store, while three would hold up the owner and take cash, airtime vouchers and cigarettes. The first shop that was robbed, however, had been opened some time ago by a Somali national.

The latest attacks come just a month shy of the anniversary of last year’s violent eviction that saw 35 Somali men, women and children rushed from the town under police guard.

“We believe that Siyaka Business Trust [Masiphumelele’s biggest business network] is behind the robberies,” an established shop owner, who does not want to be named, says.

“They said last year that we were only allowed to have 15 shops in town. Now with groups of new Somalis opening their shops here, there are about 30 shops. The new Somalis are endangering our lives and they don’t even live here,” the man says.

The shop owner’s anger towards his fellow countrymen, though unfair, is certainly understandable when viewed against the backdrop of last year’s events.

After groups of thugs, reportedly hired by local businessmen, destroyed Somali shops in August 2006, a series of so-called peace-talks between the Somalis and the STB eventually saw a verbal peace-agreement established.

The agreement stated that Somalis would only be allowed to operate 15 businesses in the neighbourhood and they also needed to increase their prices, so making themselves less attractive to shoppers.

Though STB said the agreement would ensure the Somalis’ safety, one of the peace-talk facilitators, Abdurazzzaaq Ebrahim of Islamic Relief Worldwide, termed it to be flagrantly unconstitutional.

“Unfortunately the Somalis, who wanted to move back to Masiphumelele, had no bargaining power. The failure of government to protect them from attacks basically had them agreeing to whatever was tabled.

“I cannot say it was a fair negotiation but at least there is a semblance of peace,” Ebrahim said at the time.

Though the STB, under the leadership of Khaya Cwayi, has been accused by most Somalis as the organisation behind the most recent attacks, Cwayi himself maintains that there is no truth to the allegations. “We have no problem any more with the Somalis. They are a valuable part of our community and we have already got them to increase their prices.”

When asked whether the STB was unhappy about the growing amount of businesses, a number Cwayi was adamantly should be frozen at 15 during an earlier interview, he stated that, “It is much more fair now, though we still need to get them to hire locals to work in their shops”. He added in closing that Somalis are welcome in Masiphumelele.

According to Zoe Nkongolo, director of Africa Unite, an NGO that apparently helped reconcile the STB with the Somalis, the robberies were nothing but “normal” acts of crime with no sinister motives. “The fact that the shops all belonged to Somalis was just a coincidence,” he says. “Somali business people should become more aware of their security issues.”

Somali residents seem to be keeping an ever more weary eye on their prospective customers.

“People are scared that if they report it, things will get even worse,” one shop-owner, who was also too scared to be identified said.

. Sterling work by Ocean View detectives Sergeant Stephan Share and Constable Pumla Mrwebi saw two men arrested in connection with the robberies last week.
GENERAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN ZANOKHANYO RETAILERS ASSOCIATION AND KHAYLISHA SOMALI RETAILERS ASSOCIATION IN KHAYLISHA

The following points were agreed upon:

Both Zanokhanyo and Somali committee must approve all new shops opening in the khayalisha vicinities, In order to prevent unprecedented clashes of businesses which might result in conflicts.

This will be in effect as from 01 of November 2008. Where possible new traders will not be unfairly restricted to operate if the above organizations approves.

We are appealing all stakeholders, such as KDF, local leaders, ward councilors, law enforcement agencies, religious leaders, SANCO and all other stakeholders to assist us to enforce these agreements. Your participation in this regard will be appreciated.

SIGNATURE OF BOTH PARTIES

1. Chairman (KSRA)
   Signature

2. Chairman (ZRA)
   Signature

Date: 27.11.2008
Look out Hill communiqué

Following a series of meetings that had been held in Khayelitsha, Lower Cross Road, Nyanga, Gugulethu, De noon and Delft since 2008 on the concern of the local community on the influx of foreign shop owners in the informal retail sector.

The local business community together with the Somal Retailers Association took the initiative to draft agreements in these various areas to regulate themselves in order to bring peace, mutual co-existence and co-hesion following the unfortunate and tragic event of 2008. A sample of the agreement made in Khayelitsha in 2008 is hereby attached for you attention.

These agreements have helped to foster peaceful co-existence between the local and foreign national business in the townships since 2008.

However given the lack of legal enforceability, sheer disregard by most concerned, lack of support from government structures to reinforce this local initiative we are once again witnessing the mushrooming of spaza shop owned by foreign nationals which is bound to breed social conflict within the community.

So we do hereby request you honourable minister of police to come to aid and assist the township in the following areas:

- Regulation of business in the informal retail business sector.

- Demographic representation within the sector.

- The 2008 agreement was an attempt at regulating our business environment. However we cannot enforce it ourselves. We are therefore requesting you honourable Minister for you office to assist the business community to implement our agreement or the government puts in place a binding police. Failure to do one of the above will breed anarchy in our community. This should be done without any further delay.

We count on your co-operation and action on the above.

Drafted and endorsed by representative of the local business communities, Sanco, USACO, MDC, foreign business community. On this day of 28 March 2012


K R Ncansis

Kholekile Reginald Ncansis

Adbulaziz Abdullalo Mohamad
A DRAFT MUTUAL ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN LOCAL AND SOMALI TRADERS IN GUGULETU AND OTHER COMMUNITIES IN WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE AIMED AT RESOLVING TRADE CONFLICT 6th August 2009.

Executive summary

As of April 2009, the local traders in Guguletu and indeed some other local traders in Samora Machel and Khayelitsha, have been expressing serious concerns about the way Somali traders do business in these locations. The traders claim that Somali traders sell their goods far cheaper than the local traders. They also claim that Somalis would pitch their shops closer to the shops of the locals and as their wares are sold cheaper, buyers turn to buy from the Somali shopkeepers rather than from the locals. In this manner, local shopkeepers are forced to close their shops because they are unable to compete with the Somalis. The third area of discontent against the Somalis by the locals is the fact that Somalis always keep to themselves and are insensitive to what is going on in the community. They do not contribute to community work in terms of sanitation, sports and other social issues concerning the community.

The frustration of the local traders reached its apex when in May 2009, when some leaflets were distributed in Guguletu saying that Somali traders must leave Guguletu or else they will face unpleasant consequences. The author of the leaflets is, so far still anonymous. On the 17th of June 2009, a meeting was called and chaired by the Guguletu Police and the Anti-eviction Campaign an NGO to, among other things warn the Guguletu public against any action that could incite one section of the population against another and undermine peaceful co-existence of the people. The meeting was also meant to find a peaceful solution to the grievances as expressed by the local traders against the Somalis. The meeting ended with the formation of a Committee of 10 members, five from the Somalis and five from the local traders. The work of the Committee is to come up with a recommendation on how to solve the problem.

About three hours after that meeting, one of the Somali shops was attacked, one person was killed, another seriously injured. The person killed was a member of the Committee. The attack and the killing of the Somali necessitated the calling of another urgent meeting at the initiative of the Somali community and chaired by the Minister of Police for Community Safety Mr. Max Lennit. In the meeting emphasis was again put on the fact that the police will not condone any criminal approach to solving any conflict no matter how grave the issue at stake is. He also mentioned that, though the police are interested in ensuring peace in the community, he would advise that the police be as neutral as possible in the trade conflict between the Somali and the local traders. He promised the Somalis that the police will do all it can to bring the killer of the Somali trader to justice and that the police is ready to ensure maximum security to the people living in Guguletu, including the Somalis. The meeting ended
with the Minister requesting Mr. Twallo of the Anti-eviction Campaign to continue to co-ordinate the activities of finding a lasting solution to the trade conflict.

In an effort to solve the trade conflict, the Committee came up with a four point resolution on the 19th of June 2009. The points include the following:

1. The distance between the local traders' shops and the shops of the Somali traders must not be less than 100 meters.

2. No Somali trader should be allowed to open any new shop until further notice.

3. The allocation of shops between the local traders and the Somalis must be 70% for the locals and 30% for the locals.

4. Prices of basic items like bread, paraffin, milk must be the same in both Somali and local shops.

The implementation of these four points became problematic as the locals started claiming that the Somalis were not abiding to the agreed points. They said more shops are being erected by the Somalis and that the 100 meters provision was not being respected. That the Somalis are arrogant as they do not attend meetings called to look at the implementation of the agreed points.

As the two parties could not come to an agreement, and it seemed as a stalemate situation was about to happen which ultimately could degenerate to violence, UNHCR requested to ask for another meeting to enable it have a discussion with the Somalis and to explain to them the need to co-operate with the local traders in order to avert any ugly situation from happening. The meeting with the Somalis took place on the 31st July 2009 in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Cape Town. Although the Somalis in the meeting agreed to all the points previously formulated by the Committee as afore mentioned, they made some alteration as follows:

1. The Somalis agreed to the concept of 100 meters distance between local and Somali shops. However, they claim that if Somali shops are found in a location not meeting the 100 meters stipulation, and the shops must be shifted, a new location must be identified by the locals for the Somalis to open their shops.

2. The Somalis agree to the concept that no new shops must be opened by the Somalis. However, they requested to open new shops in the future if the opportunity arises. If any new shops are to be opened though, it should be done with the expressed permission from the community or the Committee.

3. The Somalis also agreed to the idea of uniform prices of basic commodities like paraffin, meat, bread milk e.t.c. But they would want emphasis to be placed on the ranges of prices on each item and not a specific price-tag, as prices fluctuate depending on the demand and supply. For example, for basic items like, bread,
the price range could be between R. X to R Y. This means that, no one is allowed to sell his/her bread less than X Rand and not more than Y Rand.

4. The Somali traders agreed to maintain the 30% and the 70% ratio for Somalis and the local traders respectively for shops allocation. However, this provision must not be applicable to the existing shops, but in the future. This is because, since Somalis are not allowed to open new shops and the locals have got no limitation, the Committee can only regulate that, in future the presence of Somali shops must not be more than 30% and the locals must retain the 70%.

5. Additionally, Somalis said they were ready to extend their expertise knowledge to the local traders on how to do trade. But again, they say they would like to know from the local traders which areas are they really lacking so that the Somali traders could put more emphasis put there. They said the Government could also play a vital role by coming up with some guidelines on how the locals and the Somalis could co-operate in the areas of trade and commerce.

On the 4th of August a meeting was again called at the initiative of UNHCR to inform participants of the position taken by the Somalis to find a lasting solution to the current trade conflict. UNHCR also wanted the police and the Guguletu Administrative Council to attend the meeting. Ms. N.D. Ntwamambii, Member of Parliament from the Guguletu Constituency and Chief Whip of the National Council of Provinces was invited to attend the meeting but as she was too occupied with other important affairs but she requested someone from the Council to attend. The meeting was co-chaired by UNHCR and the Anti-eviction Campaign. After forward and backward arguments on whether the meeting should go ahead, because of the poor attendance by the Guguletu local traders, the meeting finally took place.

UNHCR then briefed participants of its meeting with the Somalis and the position taken by the Somalis as explained earlier. Participants agreed to the amended text including increasing their co-operation in the areas of exchange of knowledge and expertise on trade matters. In this connection, a new Management Committee was formed to replace the previous one whose functions will be to manage the implementation of the agreed points as mentioned above. The Management Committee M.G will be composed of ten members, five from the Somalis and 5 from the local traders. During their deliberations, the MC will be chaired by two Chairpersons, one from the local traders and one from the Somalis.

The meeting also concluded that, NACOC, UNHCR, the Police and the Anti-eviction Campaign will act as observers. Herewith the list of the Interim Management Committee members and their signatures:

**South African local traders:**

1. Mr. D. Langamandla, (Guguletu)
   Cell: 0837251377

**Somali traders:**

Mr. Bashir Ali, (Guguletu).
Cell 0762661650
Signature

2. Mr. Sly Madumo, (Kosovo)
   Cell 0833421934
   Signature

3. Ms. Nolikazi Jacobs, (Guguletu)
   Cell 0734383496
   Signature

4. Ms. Matsepo Motseledi, (Guguletu)
   Cell 0785695741
   Signature

5. Mr. Luvo Mdudu, (Kosovo)
   Cell 0735800669
   Signature

Observers:

1. The National Police Service, Guguletu
   Phone number
   Signature

2. The ANC Ward Councillor
   Phone number
   Signature

3. UNHCR
   Phone Number
   Signature

4. Anti-eviction Organisation
   Phone number
   Signature

5. South African National Coalition Organisation (SANCO)
   Phone number
   Mr. Patoh, 07806371108,
   Mr. Charles 0842631533
   Signature
Somali and local shopkeepers strike deal on peace

QUINTON MTYALA

AFTER months of haggling and threats, a deal has been struck between competing Somali and local shopkeepers operating in several townships.

Mncedisi Twalo of the Anti-Eviction Campaign, who along with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees senior liaison officer Lawrence Mgbangson mediated the agreement, said the deal would "stabilise communities" in areas badly affected by xenophobia.

"Part of the deal is for the Somalis to increase their prices on basic goods such as bread, milk and maize meal to bring them into line with the locals. Somali-owned shops would have to move 100m away from the locals, new shops opened since July would have to close and only 30 percent of spaza shops be owned by foreign nationals,"

The agreement follows threats by Gugulethu and Kosovo spaza shop owners in June that their Somali competitors had seven days to leave the township or be forced out.

Twalo said township traders had been provoked and driven to "near-extinction" by foreigners.

There were also plans for 23 traders, sponsored by the city council and provincial government, to be sent to "business school" to acquire new skills.

Mgbangson said the agreement was signed on Monday: "It's a deal which, if not implemented, could have led to a serious incident."

The UNHCR's Cape Town office had been receiving calls from across the country for help in establishing similar dialogues in communities racked by xenophobic threats of violence.

"For other communities it could be used as a blueprint, but only if the implementation is correct," said Mgbangson.

However, he warned that the deal must be seen as the first step. It should not be used as an excuse to encourage xenophobia: "For instance, there's no law that prices should be fixed, but it is an interim arrangement to extinguish the fires."

Sly Madumo, a trader from the Kosovo informal settlement and chairman of the Sibanye...
The woman was driving-strangled in boot

The woman was driving-strangled in boot
Somali traders plead with police
By: ilays.com: Tuesday, June 7, 2011 // u Jawaab

SOMALI shopkeepers have called on Cape Town police to help get some of their countrymen out of Gugulethu and set up shop elsewhere.

Chairperson of the Anti-Eviction Campaign (AEC) in Western Cape Mncedisi Twalo said that after the wave of xenophobic attacks in 2008, a deal was brokered between the Somalis and local shopowners.

“It was agreed that no new Somali shops would be allowed in Gugulethu and New Cross Roads. It was also agreed that any new shops would only open once peace had been restored,” Twalo said.

But new Somali businesses continued to open and this had put Somalis who signed the agreement with locals in a difficult position.

The AEC said before the agreement local shopkeepers had accused the Somalis of killing their businesses as their prices were lower.

Threatening letters were subsequently sent to the Somalis demanding that they leave the townships.

Twalo said a group of Somalis approached the AEC for help and on Sunday they met with local police.

“Peace has not completely returned. The area could easily blow up. The other problem is that the new Somali business people undercut the local guys when it comes to the price of bread, paraffin and milk. It was agreed in 2009 that every one’s prices would be the same,” Twalo added.

But Hussein Omar, Western Cape chairperson of the Somali Association of South Africa, said the flawed agreement should never have been agreed to in the first place.
"An agreement such as this should be fair to all. Agreeing that prices should be the same amounts to price fixing, which is illegal.

“We were initially part of the negotiations, but we found the AEC was biased against Somalis so we didn’t endorse the agreement,” Omar said.

“The community does not have a problem with the Somali traders. They welcome them. There are instigators and bad elements within the community who are guilty of opportunistic crimes. It is up to the police to investigate

ilays Online kala soo xiriir
webmaster@ilays.com
We’ll close down illegal spazas'

Foreign owners must get permission, says Mbekweni committee

ESTHER LEWIS
Staff Reporter

FOREIGNERS trying to open shops in Mbekweni in Paarl have been warned that if they do, their premises will be torn down—and the threat has the support of both South African and existing foreign business owners in the area.

The threat originates from a 2009 agreement signed by a committee of local and foreign businesses owners and community leaders. It said that all new traders had to get the committee’s consent before opening shops.

According to the Mbekweni agreement:
- Only one foreign-owned shop and one local business is allowed in each space.
- All new traders need permission from the committee before opening their doors.
- If local open new shops, they themselves must run them and not let them out to foreigners.

At least four new foreign-owned businesses have opened in Mbekweni, reportedly without seeking the committee’s permission, says Mbekweni Civic Organization (Manco) chairman for the Delden.

Now the committee is planning to demolish the business properties.

Samuel Makhoba, chairman of Senora Mbekweni branch, said that, pending a meeting with all rulebreakers this week, these businesses would be demolished.

They had been warned several times to close, Makhoba said.

One of the new businesses to be torn down belongs to a Somali, Ahmed Mohamed. He is renting space on the side of Sinorin Nam’s house for R2 000 a month. Numa said committee members had visited his office on a Wednesday evening last week and last Thursday morning. He had been warned that the shop could not trade there.

But Numa believes that the committee has no right to tell him what to do with his property and that he is not against the shop opening as planned.

A local shopkeeper trading next to his house was not opposed to the new shop, he said.

Koma blamed it all on jealousy.

However, even the Somali shopkeeper who trades two streets away is opposed to the new shop.

The owner had told Cape Argus that he fully supported the move to shut the business down before it even opened.

“I don’t care if it’s local or Somali,” he said.

“I didn’t give permission to be there.”

A religious leader in the area, who wished to remain anonymous, said some foreign traders were also afraid of competition.

“It’s not just the locals. Foreigners are also motivating the locals to keep out new businesses. These people are very selfish,” he said.

“There is a lot of jealousy.”

A similar agreement was reached in August 2009 between local and foreign business owners in Gugulethu, Khayelitsha and Samora Machel. This process was facilitated by the Anti-Eviction Campaign. The agreement states:

- The distance between shops should be no less than 100m.
- No Somali trader should open a new shop without the committee’s permission.
- Future traders must be in the ratio 50 percent local to 50 percent Somali.
- Prices must be the same as local, milk and paraffin must be uniform. Traders may not drop prices below a certain level.

Gugulethu Anti-Eviction Campaign leader Jack Killian Twalo said recently that traders from Philipimming and other areas had asked for copies of the document to be adapted in their areas.

Asked how it was working in Gugulethu, he said there was some compliance, but that Somalis still undercut the locals.

One trader said white bread for R6.40, about R2 cheaper than the average price.

Somalis also sold bulk hampers of rice, maize meal, oil and flour, saving the customer about R60.

“Obviously the poor will flock to their shops,” Twalo said.

“They can do that because of bulk buying. And the local businesses are suffering.”

World Anti-Eviction Campaign spokesman, Ali Ahmed Adam, however, rubbished the document.

“That was an informal agreement, which we pulled out of. You can’t set prices. It’s unconstitutional and goes against the free market system,” he said.

At the time, Adam explained, Somalis were under pressure to agree, that the association did not sign the document.

“We are people who are not educated. So if they’re under pressure, they agree to all kinds of things. We have advised them that it’s not binding.”

Adam said there had been complaints that locals trying to enforce the document, but he had advised Somalis to report intimidation to the police.

He said the committee had been formed in Khayelitsha to monitor and control the opening of new businesses there. But the group was dismantled last year because the conditions could not be enforced.

“This is a global trend. The World Anti-Eviction Campaign supported it,” Adam said.

emahloko@iod.co.za
Residents threaten to loot spaza shop

19 July 2012
ZWANGA MUKHUTHU

Residents of Nompumelelo Township yesterday threatened to loot and vandalise a new spaza shop which they claim is a contravention of an agreement reached two years ago.

Members of the Beacon Bay police and law enforcement officials from the Buffalo City Metro (BCM) were called in to intervene.

Ward councillor Makhaya Bophi said the owner of the new spaza shop had contravened a 2010 agreement signed between local residents, members of the Somali community and BCM law enforcement officials.

The agreement, he said, prohibited further establishment of Somali-owned shops in the township. There are currently 11 legally owned Somali spaza shops.

However, last week resident Vuyo Ndyisile and his wife, who are Somali, asked Ndyisile to rent out the shop to a Somali national who then turned it into a spaza shop. This angered the community.

"We held a meeting this past Saturday and we agreed that this spaza shop must stop operating, but our request fell on deaf ears," Bophi said. "To show that we are not xenophobic, we had to call police to come and shut down this spaza shop on the community's behalf."

"The community cannot afford to have any more Somali-owned shops because our own brothers and sisters need a chance to open their businesses," he said, adding that jobs were hard to find for local residents.

Ndyisile, who had locked himself up in the spaza shop, refused to open when police ordered him to do so.

"The community cannot rule in my yard," he said to members of the police.

Law enforcement officers then called Ndyisile with a R1000 fine for letting his property to an illegal business, which was operating without a licence.

Mohamed Hasan, a Somali businessman in the area, said he ported the call for the spaza shop to close.

"In order to avoid xenophobia, the shop must close and stop operating," he said. "We do not want to upset the community," he added.

Law enforcement warned Ndyisile that should the business continue, it would be demolished.

LAW ENFORCEMENT: Police and members of the Buffalo City Metro police shut down a Somali owned spaza shop operating in Nompumelelo Township yesterday Picture: ALAN EASON

Burglars, looters hit club Sad note: venue hit again

POPULAR East London hangout Fatamance Music Lounge has been burgled twice in the last few days, and during the latest incident, passers-by helped themselves to liquor and furniture.

Electricity box is a magnet for power thieves

AN ELDERLY Duncan Village woman is at her wits' end with [zinyoka (electricity thieves)] trespassing to illegally connect to an electricity box on her property.

Hudson Park pupil to represent school in London

Hudson Park High School pupil Bevuya Mahlarena took a chance when she entered the National Science Olympiad earlier this year and it paid off.

Residents threaten to loot spaza shop

RESIDENTS of Nompumelelo Township yesterday threatened to loot and vandalise a new spaza shop which they claim is a contravention of an agreement reached two years ago.

Engineers secure city power

POWER supply to central East London, including Buffalo City Metro (BCM), has been secured by vigilant city engineers.

BCM in bid to revive textiles

Fair mooted to promote sheevehwe

Top News

Your Views

Opstoker
20 July 2012 9:38 pm
My point remains: you escribe the present woes to the window of causality from 1975 to 1980, which is not logically sustainable. By all means, hold the governing party to account for its failures post...

Spire
20 July 2012 4:13 pm
@Opstoker: One of the limitations of blogs is that irony and other subtleties that require tone of voice, body language and facial expression don't transmit. As for your take on the current situation...

Pratitinyani
20 July 2012 3:28 pm
What irony Mr Manatsa! The same ANC that was so vigorously fighting for freedom of association seems to gag its own members in this so called democracy. For your information, the 67 minutes conce...

Opstoker
20 July 2012 3:26 pm
Dave, since it appears that people missed my ironic
Residents threaten to loot spaza shop

operate again, they would confiscate all goods.

Petros Majola of human rights group Khule Community Development Project condemned the calls for closure.

“We are quick to say that these foreign-owned shops must close, but are we going to provide these Somalis with food and clothing,” he said, adding that the country’s constitution catered for their rights.

“These people are not selling drugs, they are selling groceries and blankets to the people.”

Majola, who claims to know both Ndeyaale and the owner of the business, said his organisation would be seeking legal advice.

1

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TATA

12 million voices could unite in song at 8.05am

NoMoscow showered with library books

NOMOSCOl Senior Primary School near Nelson Mandela’s homestead received a container library filled with more than 1300 Xhosa and English books – thanks to bikers who visited the school yesterday

Celebs and bikers build to honour Mandela

SOUTH African celebrities and local bikers got their hands dirty yesterday to do good in honour of former president Nelson Mandela.

Digital age puts Qunu on the map

A PARTNERSHIP of companies is helping more than 100 youths from rural Qunu in the Transkei to bridge the digital divide

Mthatha feels strike pinch

The residents are starting to feel the pinch of the municipal workers’ strike, which started last week, and has brought service delivery to a standstill.

Praise for Dlamini-Zuma

PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma is “humbled” at Home Affairs Minister Nosiviwe Dlamini-Zuma’s election as chairwoman of the African Union Commission (AUC), the presidency said yesterday Monday.

tone, let me clarify: you have cited in your opening comment the ANC’s campaigns of the 1980s as the cause of the present civic disturbances in SA...

Pristinayani
20 July 2012 3:04 pm
@Dave: I’m not for the black man nor am I for the white man. I’m for the human...

Dave Rankin
20 July 2012 1:59 pm
@Pristinayani: My doctor is black (Unithra graduate). Does it count that I literally trust him with my life? For the record: What are your feelings? You jump from black-racism rhetoric to white rac...

Rob
20 July 2012 1:48 pm
@Pristinayani: When Joyce Banda, Malawi’s new president announced that the presidential jet and fleet of 90 Mercedes limousines would be sold, I applaud and respect her for that and hope every African...

Pristinayani
20 July 2012 1:33 pm
"She was charged with fraud but in July 2004 an appeal judge of the Pretoria High Court ruled &#160;&nbsp;Gaathi crimes were not committed for personal gain." I don’t see any significance of this statement by...

Pristinayani
20 July 2012 1:00 pm
@Rolf and Dave, could any one of you mention one thing that you can say a black person did with the utmost competence (could you please not mention Mandela and Tutu)....

http://www.dispatch.co.za/news/article/3726
OUR OPINION

No place for xenophobia

The shocking xenophobic attacks in South Africa in May 2008, which reportedly left over 60 dead and thousands displaced, stunned the world and led to much necessary introspection and academic discourse around xenophobia, violence and citizenship.

How had a country once held up as an international example of racial reconciliation come to this? How could we so viciously turn on people from the very same African countries that had hosted our freedom fighters?

After much nail-gazing, many conclusions were reached. The Human Sciences Research Council spoke about the underlying causes including crime, migration, corruption, job scarcity, housing and small business competition. One thing seemed certain. It should never be allowed to happen again and steps were supposed to be put in place to ensure it never did.

Local councillors – who entered and resented foreign nationals – were identified as a big problem and the HSRC emphasised the need for them to be reined in and educated.

But it seems we in the Eastern Cape learnt nothing from that horror period in our history. There have been alarming reports of our leadership sanctioning community imposed restrictions on foreign owned businesses and of bad mouthing foreigners in the most appalling terms.

Last month Bhilgo endorsed a decision by the Nomquhile township residents in East London to limit the number of Somali-owned shops that could operate there.

Local government MEC Millie Qeshabejene was supposed to investigate complaints from Somali nationals that a councillor was refusing them licences to open spaza shops unless they bribed him. But the bizarre conclusion reached was that the community-imposed limit on foreign owned shops was justified and would be enforced.

Even worse, one month later, we hear of the Bowenveld ward committee setting forth to close down unlicensed foreign-owned spaza shops.

One cannot fault police or councillors who apply the law and who act lawfully to shut down unlicensed traders. But, singling out legal residents of this country on the grounds of their ethnicity is appalling. So too is the inflammatory rhetoric that accompanied the exercise.

One ward committee member announced that these foreign shop owners sold drugs and stole local children for prostitution and had to be stopped. Councillor Sandile Maniya declared “these people” were causing the value of property to plunge in the area.

How awful that we have learnt so little. We had our Kristallnacht in 2006. Let’s not repeat it.
Somalis to register with spaza body

Luyolo Mkentane
mkentane@avusa.co.za

THE Port Elizabeth Spaza Forum of SA has resolved that Somali spaza shops in the city’s townships should register with it for better regulation.

The decision was taken during a meeting between the forum and Somali shop owners at the Raymond Mhlaba Sports Centre in Motherwell yesterday. More than 60 spaza owners attended.

Forum president Dali Mpengu said South African spaza owners needed to protect their spazas against Somalis. “We don’t want a situation where we are going to fight each other. We don’t like xenophobia.

“But the way Somalis operate, it seems as if they are on a mission to kill our businesses. They open their shops close by and drop all their prices. Our customers stop coming to our shops. When you start struggling to run the shop, they offer to buy the shop. How are you to make a living if you sell it to them?” Mpengu asked.

Mandla Peter, who chaired the meeting, said this was purely a business issue. He did not want to politicise it.

“When a Somali gets killed, we are not happy because that’s our brother. We live in one continent,” he said.

However, Mpengu said not only Somalis were a problem. “We’ve got Chinese and Bangladeshis as well. I don’t see them in this meeting.”

Govan Mbeki township spaza owner Lubabaolo Mphweshwe said to loud applause: “There must be a healthy distance between our shops. The Somali shops we have are enough. We should not allow any (more) of their shops to crop up.

“What we need to do is take stock of all the spazas we have in the PE area and register them with the forum. We would be left with no other choice but to close down any other shops that might crop up in the future.”

Another shop owner, Monwabisi Bekile, agreed with Mphweshwe. “No more Somali shops should be allowed to operate. The ones they are running are enough already.”

Somali shop owner Ibrahim Mursal said his community had held meet-