



MEDIA STATEMENT: 5 APRIL 2017

Cowardly thugs attack defenders of democracy

The Save South Africa campaign strongly condemns the cowardly attempt by a small group of thugs to disrupt the peaceful protest being held at #VukaniMzansi1 in Church Square tonight.

The thugs attempted to disrupt the occupation of Church Square that is being held in advance of the People's March on Union Buildings on Friday 7 April, and burnt banners which call for President Zuma to resign and for the defence of our democracy.

We are thankful that no-one was hurt, but call on the police and other law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety of those exercising their right to peaceful protest, and who are doing so with the permission of the authorities. We have also increased our own security.

Several of the cowards who were involved in the attack are known to the #VukaniMzansi protesters, and their names and other details have been given to the police. They include people known to be associated with the ANC and the ANC Youth League in Tshwane.

We believe it is no accident that the attack takes place less than 24 hours after inflammatory remarks at an ANCYL rally in Ekurhuleni, and call on those who made those remarks -- including the Minister of Water and Sanitation, Nomvula Mokonyane -- to take responsibility for their utterances, withdraw their threats and call on their members and supporters respect the rights of those who wish to stage peaceful protests.

This incitement and intimidation must be condemned in the strongest terms. We have a constitutional right to assemble and protest, and we will continue to exercise that right.

This incident has increased our resolve to ensure that South Africans turn out in their numbers for the gathering at 10h and the march at 12h00 on Friday. We will not only be defending our democracy and calling for Zuma to go -- we will be showing those who believe in bullying and burning that we will not be intimidated.

A people united will never be defeated!