



EFF CONDEMNS SAPS FOR REPORTEDLY KILLING A CIVILIAN AT WITS UNIVERSITY STUDENT PROTEST

Wednesday, 10 March 2021

The EFF condemns in the harshest terms, the reported murder of a civilian during the protests by students of the University of Witwatersrand, in Braamfontein Johannesburg.

Over the past few days, students at the institution have been engaged in peaceful protests, demanding free registration and the clearance of debt, to ensure that no one is turned away from education as a result of not having money.

The reported murder of a civilian is a tragic occurrence that is a result of drawn out brutality against students who have the noble demand of access to education. It is not only a tragedy but represents a blood thirsty government that has never had any regard for education as a means of giving the downtrodden dignity and opportunity.

Since the epoch of Fees Must Fall, government has constructed no plan to sustain funding for higher education, and since the regime of Cyril Ramaphosa has begun a narrow economic approach of austerity has led to budget cuts, that have a direct impact on the lives of the poor.

The incident of the shooting and harassment of students demanding education is a product of poor economic policy, lack of a developmental approach to education and a regime that resolves confrontations to its failures with violence.

The EFF calls for the arrest of all police officers who were involved in an indiscriminate opening of fire on protesting students and civilians. It is reckless behaviour that mirrors the action of Marikana, in which unthreatening workers were slain in defence of capital.

We will further call for a review in the artillery used for crowd control by members of the South African Police Services, namely rubber bullets and teargas. History has shown us that these two forms of artillery are not suitable for use in situations that require the dispersing of crowds.

Too many deaths have occurred as a result of misuse of rubber bullets and teargas by seemingly incompetent police who fire at close range and throw teargas cans directly at people.

The crisis of funding in South Africa, which is leading to the poor being unable to register in institutions of higher learning is a direct breach to the right to education, and to further shoot, injure and kill people in defence of financial exclusion, constitutes a human rights violation.

Central to this entire crisis, is the incompetent Minister of Higher Education who not only has a history of leading the charge to brutalise students, but has failed on all possible metrics in ensuring there is access to education in South Africa.

Blade Nzimande has been unapologetic about students falling; he is on record calling for “#StudentsMustFall” even though these words were publicly uttered under the guise of banter his words have come to pass in the deregistration of 20 000 students in Unisa. Today a life has been lost because he has formed a movement called #StudentsMustFall, Bheki Cele and Nzimande are killer members of this diabolic anti-black movement.

Nzimande has no workable plan to resolve the funding crisis in higher education, and so long as he remains in that position, we can expect further exclusion, collapse in the sector and bloodshed.

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