



EFF STATEMENT ON THE OCCASION MARKING THE ARRIVAL OF DUTCH SETTLERS IN THE CAPE

Thursday, 06 April 2023

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) notes that today, the 6th of April 2023, marks 371 years since the arrival of Dutch settlers in the Cape in 1652, led by Jan Van Riebeeck, who was accompanied by 82 other vagabonds. Van Riebeeck was contracted by the Dutch East India Company to establish a refreshment station in the Cape and left the Netherlands towards the end of 1651 using three ships, the Dromedaris, the Rejiger and De Goede Hoop, and arrived in what we now know as the Cape on the 6th of April in 1652

Under the guise of what was initially meant to be a mere refreshment station, emerged a permanent settlement for the Dutch when the Dutch East India Company issued permits for nine of their servants to farm as free burghers along the cape in order to supplement the company's wheat supply. The expansion of these farming enterprises with more licenses issued to the so-called free burghers meant that there was an acute need for more labour. The local Khoi people were not seen as suitable for the labour demands of the farms, and as a result, the Company decided to bring in enslaved people from Batavia, now known as Indonesia, as well as from Madagascar from 1657 onwards.

This expansion of Dutch agricultural interests had multiple effects on the future of the territory that would later be known as South Africa. It firstly established the Cape as a slave trading center, in which the exploitation and dehumanization of people would take root that has proven so resilient that it has not been dislodged in that part of the world till today.

Secondly, the expansion of the Dutch farming interests put them in violent collision with the indigenous inhabitants of the land, the Khoi, leading to the first war between the Dutch and indigenous people in 1659 to 1670, which started in the area now known as the Fish Hoek. The indigenous people of the Cape would fight numerous other wars with the Dutch invaders up until late in the 18th century, when the Dutch expanded eastwards and encountered the Xhosa in what they called the Zuurveld. This encounter led to the first of nine wars extending for a period of 100 years between the Xhosa and European settlers. The first of these wars was fought from 1779 to 1781 between the Dutch settlers and AmaXhosa, and the last was fought between 1877 and 1879 between AmaXhosa and the English colonialists.

From the moment Van Riebeeck and his group of bandits arrived in the Cape up to this day, African people have not known peace in this territory. From that moment, every single encounter between European settlers and indigenous African people has always been mediated by violence, by forceful juniorisation of African people, and more centrally, by dispossession of land, which was and still is the material and spiritual basis of African personality.

The 6th of April is important reference point in our continued struggle for decolonization, and decolonization in essence entails the return to African

of all that was stripped away from them. It entails the return of the land, the complete eradication of all forms of oppression and exploitation, and the re-affirming of the humanity of African people.

We call on all African people in this country to never forget where we come from, and never allow the blood of our ancestors who fought to death in defence of their land to have fallen in vain.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Sinawo Thambo (National Spokesperson) 072 629 7422

Leigh-Ann Mathys (National Spokesperson) 082 304 7572

✉ communications@effonline.org

🌐 <http://www.effonline.org>

🐦 @EFFSouthAfrica

📷 @EFFSouthAfrica

📘 Economic Freedom Fighters

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