



## PRESS STATEMENT

The thirteen members of Abahlali baseMjondolo, arrested by police following the events of late September when members of the grassroots movement were attacked and evicted from the Kennedy Road informal settlement in Durban, appeared for the sixth time in their bail application in the Durban Magistrate's Court today.

At a prayer service held outside the court grounds this morning, prior to the court proceedings, Anglican Bishop Rubin Phillip, voiced his outrage and disappointment at what he called a "scandal" and a "travesty of justice".

Bishop Rubin, who was recently awarded the Bremen Peace Award in Germany, for his courageous efforts at addressing injustices in KwaZulu-Natal, reminded those present that "Jesus' mission here on earth is not only spiritual – it is about social and political aspects too". "The Church," he added, "has a responsibility to witness to a God who cares for the oppressed and impoverished." He urged church leaders and the wider faith community to continue to pray and to protest for justice in the case of the Kennedy Road 13, as they have come to be known.

"The state authorities will not win this case" said the bishop, "this battle will be won by the church and the people. Justice will come about."

During the court proceedings, the defence argued against a further postponement of the bail application, on grounds that the defendants' right to a speedy bail hearing had already been denied and that the Court was favouring the State which had yet to provide any evidence to the contrary in the bail hearing. The State's attempt to link any of the charges to the 13 accused had failed thus far and the accused have been incarcerated in Westville Prison for almost two months, having now appeared for the sixth time.

Diakonia Council of Churches, strongly condemns the State's unwillingness or inability to pass judgement in this case, after the Court again postponed the bail hearing to the 27<sup>th</sup> November, allowing the State a third extension of time to support its opposition to the granting of bail. Methodist Bishop Mike Vorster added his dismay at the proceedings to date, saying "the prolonging of justice in this matter is unfair indeed – it is high time that everyone involved in the violence which occurred in Kennedy Road are brought to justice. This matter has become one-sided and it is unfair that members of Abahlali baseMjondolo are targeted." He urged authorities to bring the matter to a speedy end.