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## **CoRMSA calls for the Realisation of Freedom for All, during this Freedom Month**

The Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) joins South Africa in celebrating Freedom month, this April. This year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the country's first democratic elections on April 27<sup>th</sup>. This day is a tribute to those who fought against the Apartheid regime to establish a nation that is equal, representative, and inclusive. It holds greater significance as the nation celebrates Freedom Month under the theme "**30 Years of Democracy, Partnership and Growth.**"

Freedom Month offers a chance to reflect on the progress made since the country's transition to democracy and identify areas for further improvement.

"We celebrate 30 years of democracy by honouring the sacrifices of our heroes and heroines who bravely fought apartheid's injustices," said CoRMSA Executive Director, Thifulufheli Sinthumule. "Their relentless dedication paved way for a more just and equitable society. However, the fight for a better South Africa continues. Let's use this month as a springboard to address the presenting challenges and work together for continued progress and unified South Africa for all."

While we are celebrating 30 years of democracy that liberated everyone in the country, the country is still experiencing some oppression and exclusion of refugees and migrants from the society. Social ills such as xenophobia, racial discrimination, racism, inequality and social injustice still persist, according to media reports.

The above oppressions and exclusions of refugees and migrants will be exacerbated by the introduction of the White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection which proposes to restrict the freedom of refugees, and migrants by limiting their freedom of movement and their ability to live in South Africa. This is a betrayal of the hard-fought freedoms that are not enjoyed by all, and a contradiction to the country's constitution.

The theme for Freedom Month, "**30 Years of Democracy, Partnership and Growth,**" underscores the importance of our participatory democracy of working together to address these challenges and strengthen South Africa's democracy. CoRMSA calls on the South African government, civil society, and all citizens to collaborate in a spirit of unity to create a truly equal society.

CoRMSA cautions and urges the Department of Home Affairs not to go ahead with proposed shift on migration management and to withdraw or suspend the White Paper to allow more appropriate consultation process with affected group (refugees and migrants), and the Civil Society Sector to seek legal advice. Policy-making like this cannot be allowed in a democratic country to stand, as opposed to the mandate given to government by the South African people.

**For more information, please contact CoRMSA at [communications@cornsa.org.za](mailto:communications@cornsa.org.za)**

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