

## Media statement

13 March 2023

The Campaign for Free Expression (CFE) is deeply concerned about the rising rate of violent attacks against journalists.

eNCA journalist Silindelo Masikane, cameraman Thamsanqa Chamane and Zululand Observer journalist Gaddafi Zulu were attacked and assaulted while they were on duty.

These attacks – often by political figures and state officials - have become a form of censorship which suppresses and silences journalists and often goes unpunished.

On Saturday 25 February 2023, Masikane and cameraman Thamsanqa Chamane were trying to interview MMC Tshwaku in Johannesburg CBD when EFF supporters formed a barrier around him, in an attempt to prevent her from speaking to him. Masikane was shoved to the ground and stepped on by EFF supporters and JMPD officials. Fortunately, Masikane was not severely injured.

Zulu was attacked on 28 February by a former mayor and a group of bodyguards while on duty at Mtubatuba Municipality to investigate reports that newly-appointed administrator Siya Ntuli had been prevented from entering the premises. His work equipment was taken away.

Journalists ought to be able to carry out their work without fear of being harassed and attacked. It is imperative for the authorities to demonstrate that they are prepared to protect the media.

CFE calls on South African authorities to thoroughly investigate the attacks and bring the perpetrators to justice, as violence against the media is a crime against our democratic values such as free expression and the right to information.

\*The Campaign for Free Expressions is a non-partisan, non-profit organisation that defends and promotes free expression for all across southern Africa.

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