

# UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT

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## STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF JOHANNES NGALO

We condemn in strongest terms the death of Johannes Bonakele Ngalo after only a few hours in Police custody. Mr Ngalo was arrested in Tumahole Township on Sunday night during a protest against rent and GST increases by more than a thousand township residents.

Mr Ngalo is the 57th person to die in detention in South Africa and his death follows the shocking announcement last week by Minister le Grange that there were more than seventy people detained under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act. Forty of whom are unknown and have disappeared without trace. The police have used the Protection of Information Act to hide the details of these detainees from the public. In a statement issued last week, the DPSC said that they were deeply alarmed by current events and that they feared that if they were to go unchecked we might have further disappearances like Mthimkulu's and deaths like Malatji's.

The government's violent reaction to a peaceful protest shows that the people do not have a semblance of control over their own lives. This emphasises the relevance of the UDF's call for votes for all in a united South Africa.

We warn this government that ruthless suppression of the voice of opposition and protest cannot guarantee its rule. Neither will it force our people into submission. The experiences of the 1976 events, Sharpville and others should have convinced the government that the people's quest for freedom cannot be stopped by teargas, bullets, batons, detentions or any form of harassment for that matter. History has shown that violence meted out to unarmed people leads to reciprocal violence in desperation.

Issued by:

Detainees Support Committee

DPSC

UDF.