



Genocide Watch
The Alliance Against Genocide

Country Report: South Africa

From 1948–1994, South Africa was dominated by [Afrikaner nationalism](#). Racial segregation and white minority rule known officially as [apartheid](#), an [Afrikaans](#) word meaning "separateness", was implemented in 1948. Apartheid legalized [white supremacy](#) in all spheres of social, economic, and political life.

After decades of government repression, opposition [terrorism](#), and international sanctions, President F.W. DeKlerk unbanned the [African National Congress](#) (ANC) and freed its leader, Nelson Mandela, after 22 years of imprisonment. In 1994, the ANC won the country's first democratic election. The African National Congress still governs South Africa, in an alliance with the [South African Communist Party](#) and the [Congress of South African Trade Unions](#).

From 1999 -2005, South Africa established the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (TRC), to investigate human rights violations under apartheid. Despite apartheid's fall, the inequality of wealth under apartheid persists in South Africa.

Millions of immigrants from poorer African countries have settled in South Africa since 1994. Xenophobia against them has resulted in violent attacks, notably in 2008 and 2015, when over [50,000](#) immigrants were displaced. Due to [anger](#) about unemployment, high crime rates, and poor public services, young South Africans blame immigrants for taking jobs away from them. No perpetrators of the 2008 attacks on foreigners, the 2015 Durban riots, or the 2019 violence in eThekweni have been brought to justice.

The same impunity results from non-prosecution of murders of white farmers. The Marxist, racist Economic Freedom Front party of Julius Malema encourages these murders, which are meant to terrorize farmers into emigrating from South Africa. Many of the murders are hate crimes. The perpetrators torture, rape, and disembowel their victims. They leave Afrikaans Bibles on dead bodies. White farmers are defenseless because South Africa outlawed private gun possession and disbanded the mutual protection cooperatives organized by farmers in the past.

The South African Police Service (SAPS) and Metro Police contribute to [xenophobic violence](#) through counterfeit goods raids of foreigners' homes, which too often become excuses to commit beatings and destruction. SAPS also conducts "documentation raids", where police and the Department of Home Affairs enter peoples' homes to "verify" their legal status. Even after providing proper documentation, foreigners are often detained, beaten, and denied access to lawyers. [Police brutality](#) is rampant, with almost 400 deaths, 124 cases of rape, and 270 cases of torture attributed to police action in 2019 alone.

South Africa has one of the highest crime rates in the world. Its murder rate of 34 per 100,000 population, tenth in the world, is exceeded only by the narco-states of Central and South America. It has, by far, the highest murder rate in Africa. If the state's first duty is to provide personal security to its people, South Africa is a failed state.

In 2019, President Cyril Ramaphosa's government launched the "[National Action Plan to Combat Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance](#)" (NAP), a welcome step forward.

Genocide Watch considers South Africa to be at **Stage 6: Polarization**.

Genocide Watch recommends:

- The President should [investigate and reform SAPS'](#) counterfeit and documentation raids.
- The South African police must be modernized and thoroughly reformed.
- South Africa should re-authorize cooperative armed mutual protection for farmers.
- President Ramaphosa should denounce the Marxist, racist Economic Freedom Front.
- South Africa must fulfil its constitutional duty of fair compensation for willing land redistribution.