



## **MEDIA BRIEFING STATEMENT**

### **MEDIA BRIEFING STATEMENT BY HON. TEBOHO REGINALD SELELANE PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN UNION OF SPAZA SHOPS (SAUSS) UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF THE UNITED CIVIC MOVEMENTS (UCM)**

Programme Director,  
Members of the Media,  
Leadership of the United Civic Movements,  
Fellow South Africans,

The South African Union of Spaza Shops welcomes President Cyril Ramaphosa's address on Monday regarding the growing challenge of illegal immigration and its impact on the social and economic fabric of our nation.

While several leaders within the United Civic Movements have already spoken extensively on the broader implications of illegal immigration, I wish to focus specifically on its direct impact on employment opportunities, economic participation, and the survival of township enterprises.

Let us be unequivocal.

South Africa is a sovereign constitutional democracy governed by laws, not sentiments. No nation can sustain economic growth, create jobs, or protect local enterprise if its immigration laws are treated as optional guidelines rather than binding legal instruments.

The Constitution of the Republic imposes an obligation upon the State to protect, promote and fulfil the rights of its citizens. This responsibility extends to safeguarding economic opportunities and ensuring that lawful participation in the economy is not undermined by widespread non-compliance with immigration legislation.

The Immigration Act, No. 13 of 2002, is explicit. It establishes the legal framework through which foreign nationals may enter, reside, work and conduct business within South Africa. The legislation further provides for business permits and investment requirements intended to ensure that foreign-owned enterprises contribute meaningfully to economic development, job creation and the national fiscus.

Yet across many townships and communities, we continue to witness the proliferation of businesses operating outside the parameters prescribed by law.

This reality cannot continue to be ignored.

Every illegally operated business represents unfair competition against law-abiding South African entrepreneurs who pay municipal fees, comply with by-laws, obtain permits, meet health and safety requirements, and carry the financial burden of regulatory compliance.

The result is devastating.

Young South Africans are denied economic opportunities. Local traders are pushed out of the market. Township economies become increasingly vulnerable to informal networks operating beyond effective regulation and accountability.

This is not merely an immigration issue.

It is an economic justice issue.

It is a constitutional governance issue.

And it is a law enforcement issue.

As SAUSS, we therefore support decisive, lawful and sustained enforcement of immigration legislation. We reject selective enforcement. We reject symbolic operations designed only for media headlines. South Africans deserve visible, measurable and consistent implementation of the law.

A country that fails to regulate who participates in its economy ultimately compromises its ability to protect jobs, stimulate entrepreneurship and achieve inclusive economic growth.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to conclude by addressing a matter that remains central to the mandate of SAUSS.

Law enforcement must not end with municipal by-laws.

Far too often authorities focus exclusively on trading permits while turning a blind eye to broader violations affecting consumers and legitimate businesses.

We therefore call upon all law enforcement agencies, municipalities, provincial governments and regulatory authorities to intensify the enforcement of consumer protection legislation.

Particular attention must be directed towards the Consumer Protection Act of 2008, especially the provisions designed to protect consumers from unsafe goods, misleading trade practices and unlawful commercial conduct.

Equally important is the robust enforcement of the Counterfeit Goods Act, which exists to combat the sale and distribution of counterfeit products that threaten public health, undermine legitimate businesses and erode consumer confidence.

As the South African Union of Spaza Shops, we will continue to champion not only the interests of spaza shop owners but also the constitutional rights of consumers.

Consumers have a right to safe products.

Consumers have a right to fair business practices.

Consumers have a right to lawful economic participation.

And South Africans have a right to expect that the laws of the Republic will be enforced without fear, favour or prejudice.

The era of selective enforcement must come to an end.

The rule of law must prevail.

The integrity of our economy must be protected.

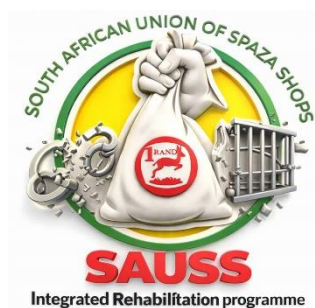
And the interests of South African citizens must remain at the centre of national policy and governance.

I thank you.

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