

■ HUMAN RIGHTS



HUNDREDS of people belonging to several civil society organisations marched in Durban yesterday to call for human rights to be upheld. | DOCTOR NGCOBO African News Agency (ANA)

'Our rights are still being oppressed'

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CIVIL society organisations called for the human rights of marginalised people to be recognised during a march in Durban yesterday.

Hundreds of people marched from King Dinizulu Park to the City Hall on Human Rights Day.

Mthembiseni Thusi, the deputy president and spokesperson for hostel dwellers organisation Abunye bam-aHostela, said they had nothing to celebrate on this day as their rights were being ignored.

He said eThekweni Municipality had been ignoring recommendations made by the public protector regarding violence and the rehabilitation of the hostels.

"Even recently, the office of Public Protector Busisiwe Mkhwebane has visited hostels, but nothing has been

done. We also wrote a letter with our complaints to the MEC of Human Settlements and Public Works, Ravi Pillay, but still there is no response," said Thusi.

Last week, the city met representatives from Mkhwebane's office regarding the matter. The city said it had committed to giving updates on the rehabilitation work being done at Glebelands in uMlazi.

Speaking to the crowd, Sbu Zikode, president of shack dwellers movement Abahlali baseMjondolo, said they would not sit back and allow their human rights to be undermined.

"All human rights are for all. We will not tolerate the side-lining of our basic human rights. We are tired of killings in informal settlements and hostels," said Zikode. He urged all human rights organisations to be united and to work together.

"There is no organisation that can

free this country alone. This is the first of many marches to come as we want change for all people," he said.

The chairperson of the Market Users Committee, Nico Magwaza, said the rights of street vendors were being violated when they were just trying to make a living.

"There is no reason for us to celebrate this day because our rights are still being oppressed. When our people try to make a living by selling on the street, they want us to have a permit, yet there are people who have been applying for permits for more than nine years with no approval," said Magwaza.

Other organisations present at the march were the Active Citizens Movement, Right to Know campaign, South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, Poor Flat Dwellers Association, Mayine Azania Movement, and the African Solidarity Network.