

Apartheid Era Victims' Families Group

(AVFG) Charter

Who we are?

- We are the mothers, sisters, daughters, brothers, fathers, uncles, sons, relatives, concerned members of the community and the immediate family members of compatriots who were killed under mysterious and suspicious circumstances whilst in detention of the Apartheid police or where the hand of the Apartheid police was clearly evident in their killing.
- We have, for more than 20 years, lived in the hope that there will be further investigations and possible prosecutions into the killing of our beloved as recommended to the National Prosecutions Authority (NPA) by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).
- We are hopeful that the renewed commitment of the NPA and specifically the NDPP will produce the desired results despite the time-frame in which they are presently operating.
- We are optimistic that the truth will prevail if comprehensive examinations are undertaken.
- We are confident that it is only through thorough and objective inquiries that the truth of our loved ones shall be revealed
- We are positive that the outcomes of each and every investigation will affirm that not one of them died from having committed suicide or died as a result of slipping on a bar of soap or via any other method other than having been callously killed at the hands of the Security Branch and its ilk.

What do we want?

- We want the assurance from the NPA and related structures that there is no tampering with the existing evidence.

- We need reassurance that there is no further interference with any one of the ongoing investigations and that there will be a committed NPA team solely dedicated to moving these matters forward.
- We demand that no Apartheid-era officials, their agents and their sympathisers or anyone with a vested interest in not wanting the truth to prevail form part of this important process.
- We insist that if the NDPP is aware of anyone, who is working in the NPA (and this must include the HAWKS) and who has deliberately obstructed or refrained from performing his/her functions, tampered with, interfered with or discouraged further investigation into these matters that each of them be identified and immediately be removed from any of the investigations.
- We request that access to all apartheid-era records in particular the police, intelligence and National Archives relating to our family members' killings be made available.
- We urge that officials assigned to cases either from the SAPS/HAWKS and the NPA be sensitised to the individual and collective trauma suffered by victim's family members.
- We add that this sensitivity goes beyond the usual respect and courtesy that are generally displayed and that the investigators demonstrate complete empathy and compassion for each and every one that suffered trauma and pain.
- We desire that all exchanges take place in an amicable manner at all times.
- We enjoin that on going, organised, clear, unambiguous feedback on the individual matters be communicated to the family members.
- We appeal that this feedback be organised in the form of a task team in which Victim's Families are represented, alongside the Hawks investigators and the NPA.
- We seek that a representative from the Victim's Families Group (VFG) be resourced to visit and meet with NPA and related representatives and that the latter provide feedback to individuals or groups in various key centres in the country.
- And we plead that committed, passionate and dedicated public officials assist families in achieving closure

What we can do?

- We are willing to work with and assist the Hawks and the NPA officials (formation of a joint task team) in reaching the conclusion of all of these matters
- We can make a representative of the families available for the meeting with VFG and for the feedback meetings arranged with the Hawks and the NPA.
- We will do this in an amicable manner as we believe that our institutions of ensuring justice for all our people is the product of the democracy that our beloved ones strove for and for which they were inhumanely murdered.
- We have in our possession, biographies, photographs, testimonies that show that all of our loved ones, who were murdered, were healthy, sane and full of energy as they worked for our country's liberation.
- We – VFG members - have affidavits, newspaper articles and even documentaries produced that reflect the improbability that those killed did not commit suicide. And that many VFG members have copies of the inquest documents, pathology reports and TRC records that may be used as supporting documents regarding their claims.

What we do not want?

- We do not want to engage in activities that seek in any way to prolong a resolution of these investigations and prosecutions.
- We wish to categorically state that as members of the Victims' Families that our intention is free from and devoid of wanting to embarrass and humiliate our democratically elected government for having failed to adequately address these unfinished matters.
- We would like to avoid at all costs a stalemate with government departments that are tasked with the investigation of the killings and prosecution of those guilty.
- We only request that transparency and honesty be integral throughout the process as we work together to achieve closure at the familial and national levels.