

Political Killings in South Africa: A Political Conundrum?

P Hlongwane

University of South Africa, South Africa

Abstract: Political killings are not a new phenomenon in South Africa. The killings of politicians date back to the apartheid era when the anti-apartheid activists were deliberately purged by the previous apartheid regime. Further, political killings escalated uncontrollably in the early 1990s when violent political confrontation between the African National Congress (ANC) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) erupted, thus before the first democratic elections in 1994. The 1994 democratic elections were followed by a period of political calmness and peace. However, since 2011, local government elections, political violence and killings have been on the rise in South Africa. It appears that political solutions that have been identified to curtail political killings in South Africa have not been successful. Therefore, this paper questions whether political killings can be considered as a political conundrum worthy of political solutions only. To this end, the paper discusses various reasons for political killings and reflects on possible solutions. The paper is based on the review of scholarly and non-scholarly documents that are accessible to the public. This paper shows that the most common reasons for political killings are due to political intolerance, factionalism, competition for limited political positions and proliferation of illegal firearms. It is argued that although political solutions are crucial towards reducing political killings in South Africa, the justice cluster should be equally responsible for actively dealing with political killings. The paper concludes that special legislation and courts that deal with political killings should be established. At the same time, special investigative units that are well resourced need to be established on a permanent basis, to deal with political killings proactively.

Keywords: Factionalism, Political intolerance, Political killings, Politicians

1. Introduction

Political killings reflect the extent of political violence in political contestation in South Africa (Bruce, 2013). In the past, violence in South Africa was driven by various factors such as political intolerance, tribal and ethnic differences. These factors played a key divisive role in the rivalry between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Consequently, most people were killed in some parts of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng Province between the late 1980s and early 1990s, prior to the advent of democracy in South Africa (Mbhanye, 2022). This view is sustained by Phakathi (2019), who points out that violence in South Africa dates back from the apartheid government, which used violence against the black majority who sought political freedom and independence with a view to suppress their legitimate demands. Nevertheless, Mbhanye (2022) portrays a bleak state of political affairs in South Africa, revealing that political killings target both political leaders as well as some incumbents of administrative positions in government. In that regard, Mbhanye (2022) depicts the spread of

political assassinations in South Africa from the year 2000 until 2017 as follows. The Northern Cape had 1 murder case; Free State recorded only 5 murder cases; Limpopo had 7 murder cases; North-West had 15 cases; Mpumalanga recorded 22 murder cases; Western Cape had 22 cases; Eastern Cape recorded 23 murder cases; Gauteng recorded 39 murder cases and KwaZulu-Natal had 157 murder cases. This data shows that KwaZulu-Natal is more vulnerable to political assassinations followed by Gauteng Province. However, it must be noted that murder cases reported in KwaZulu-Natal surpass the combined number of cases reported in the other eight provinces in South Africa.

Bruce (2013) defines political killings as assassinations that can be linked to rivalry over political power. Furthermore, Bruce (2013) notes that political killings may also happen when supporters of rival political organisations attack one another for political reasons. For instance, clashes between supporters of different political parties may occur when they restrict campaigning in areas deemed their strongholds for support to their respective

parties. In the context of this paper, a political killing can be described as an assassination of a political activist, whether it is a leader or supporter of a political party, for reasons related incumbency, political beliefs or conscientious objections.

There are instances when political leaders or supporters are killed and such incidents are subsequently reported as politically motivated deaths, but further investigations reveal that such occurrences were not political (Bruce, 2014). According to Phakathi (2019), some of the political killings could be fuelled by a struggle for survival, in which case individuals attempt to eliminate one another to avoid competition for available political positions, especially if such a position is remunerated. In line with this view, Bruce (2013:13) states that "for a killing to be 'political', it must be motivated by or connected to contestation or rivalry, either regarding access to political power, or conflict over the way in which the individual targeted (or a group aligned with that individual), is exercising his or her political power." Moreover, Bruce (2013) argues that political killings in South Africa are not considered as an excusable or justifiable form of resistance, but rather viewed as ordinary forms of murder that need to be handled by the criminal justice system.

De Haas (2020) notes that political killings continued to increase even beyond the apartheid dispensation, despite the availability of information concerning this challenge, while less progress has been made to arrest, prosecute and convict the perpetrators of these heinous crimes. Between 2010 and 2020, approximately 140 political assassinations occurred in the eThekweni Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal only. These killings increase exponentially towards the local and national government elections, as well as the elective conferences of the African National Congress (ANC) (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2020). This paper questions whether political killings can be considered as a political conundrum worthy of political solutions only. As a point of departure, the paper evokes the Theory of Self-Control to understand political killings in South Africa. Furthermore, the paper discusses various reasons for political killings and reflects on alternative solutions thereof. The paper is based on the review of scholarly and non-scholarly documents that focus of the issue of political killings, especially in South Africa. Specifically, this paper reflects on political killings that occurred in South Africa between the years 2000 and 2021.

2. Theoretical Framework on Political Killings

The theoretical framework chosen for the purpose of deciphering political killings is the Self-Control Theory. This theory was developed by Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi in a book entitled *A General Theory of Crime* in 1990 (Morley, 2018; Opp, 2020). The theory was predominantly used in the field of criminology to understand human inclination to commit crime or deviant behaviour. Self-Control Theory indicates that "crime and behaviour are due to the inability to deter gratification" (Morley, 2018:152-153). In other words, individuals may engage in deviant conduct because of failure to exercise self-restraint. According to Higgins (2007), self-control consists of six key elements, namely: impulsivity, self-centeredness, risk taking, pre-dilection for simple tasks, indifference to mental activity than physical activity and uncontrolled temper. Furthermore, people with low self-control have a tendency of ignoring the aftermaths of their own actions for themselves and other people (Higgins, 2007).

Gibson (2010) mentions that proclivity to pursue short-term and immediate gratification, despite the long-term negative consequences, is a clear manifestation of low self-control. This explains why an individual can hire a hitman to kill another person, because of an insatiable desire for immediate self-gratification that may flow from state resources in the form of tenders. Consistent with this view, Morley (2018) asserts that ill-discipline is a result of defective self-control, while low self-control leads to various forms of antisocial behaviour, such as violence and crime. Furthermore, low self-control indicates the extent to which individuals are susceptible to temptations at a single point in time (Morley, 2018). In Gibson's (2010) view, self-control reflects the ability to avoid short-term benefits that may result in enduring negative outcomes. In support of this view, Akers (1991:203) argues: "low self-control is the cause of the propensity to commit criminal behaviour. It is the cause of crime, because persons with low self-control seek immediate gratification and have less ability than those with high self-control to resist the temptations of the immediate rewards universally derivable from crime and to be affected by the longer-term costs of crime and benefits of conformity." Gibson (2010) agrees that individuals with high levels of self-control are less likely to pursue short-term gratification, even

in circumstances where there are no legal or social restraints. As a matter of fact, Gibson (2010:18) states: "those with low self-control have a tendency to be unkind and lack empathy, and therefore, are insensitive toward people on whom they directly or indirectly inflict pain or discomfort." Indeed, political killings reflect callousness and absence of kindness on the part of those who commit such heinous crimes, as well as those who initiate the killings.

3. Reasons for Political Killings in South Africa

Political violence in South Africa could be attributed to political intolerance, factionalism, competition for limited resources and proliferation of illegal arms in hotspot areas. Each reason indicated as a possible contributor to political killings in South Africa is discussed separately below.

3.1 Political Intolerance

Gibson and Gouws (2002) state that political intolerance is one of the most vexing issues facing a democratic South Africa. Political intolerance can be defined as the reluctance to allow other people, notwithstanding their political perspectives, to contest for political power through peaceful and legal means. Prior to the 2021 local government elections, City Press (2021) reported three separate incidents that reflect the extent of political intolerance in South Africa. During the first incident, members of the governing party (ANC) attempted to block the leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and supporters from entering a voter registration station in Pietermaritzburg. In the second incident, a member of ActionSA was reportedly threatened and divested of possessions by a member of the ANC in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. In the third incident, two members of the Democratic Alliance (DA) were kidnapped and assaulted while their car, branded in colours of the DA, was subsequently set alight. In response to political intolerance and manifestation of political violence, evidence suggests that the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) made efforts to call for calm in South Africa, especially in KwaZulu-Natal, to create an environment conducive for free and fair elections. For example, in 2009, the Independent Electoral Commission appealed to leaders of various political parties, civil society, party members and supporters to cooperate (Independent Electoral Commission, 2009). This was a necessary call by the IEC, in order to ensure that all

political parties would be able to participate without any impediments in public campaigns.

Bruce (2013) mentions that shortly after the launch of the National Freedom Party (NFP), which broke away from the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in 2011, 22 members of the NFP were killed between February 2011 and July 2012. Besides, De Haas (2016:49) reports that during the EFF's manifesto launch in Esikhawini (Richards Bay) prior to the 2016 local government elections, a confrontation between the ANC and EFF supporters was averted through police intervention. A study conducted by Gibson and Gouws (1998:18) found that individuals with "stronger identities will therefore be more likely to judge a variety of political movements negatively, perhaps to be threatened by them and unwilling to tolerate their political activities". This indicates that group identities of the various political parties in South Africa could have a major influence on political tolerance. In other social identities, such as political beliefs, it may result in some degree of political intolerance if an individual holds strongly onto such beliefs.

Gibson and Gouws (1998) assert that strong group identities do not contribute towards political tolerance and are opposed to the democratic theory. De Haas (2016) reports that between January and July 2016, three NFP supporters, three IFP supporters and fourteen (14) ANC supporters were murdered during separate incidents, which can be construed as being politically motivated deaths. Gibson and Gouws (2002) argue that the prevalence of political intolerance in South Africa is not unexpected, however, the absence of political tolerance may translate into majoritarian tyrannies. In other words, political intolerance could be harmful to a democratic principle, as it may create instability and absence of trust amongst key political formations. Due to the extent of political intolerance in South Africa, Gibson and Gouws (2000) suggest that there is a need for common understanding amongst political parties and their supporters that democratic theory requires tolerance and equal protection of the rights and perspectives of the opposition parties, irrespective of agreements or disagreements.

3.2 Factionalism

On 1 March 2011, an ANC councilor in KwaZulu-Natal was killed while another murder incident took place on 9 September 2012, where a branch

secretary and chairperson of the ANC were killed. In both incidents, evidence presented in the court of law proved beyond a reasonable doubt that the killings were politically motivated, due to internal rivalry or factions within the ruling ANC (Bruce, 2013). According to Krelekrele (2018), political killings can be attributed to factionalism within the governing party, maladministration and corruption. Unfortunately, those who are in pursuit of dignity or integrity, thereby exposing incidents of corruption, are threatened and subsequently killed. In line with this view, Bruce (2014) indicates that some of the politicians are targets of assassinations immediately, when it becomes apparent that they intend to expose corruption that involves their fellow political comrades. For example, two members of the ANC in the Sisonke District Municipality were reportedly living in fear for their lives, after exposing corruption and financial malfeasance estimated at R400 million in irregular or councilors expenditure (De Haas, 2016). Furthermore, Krelekrele (2018:3) asserts that "competition for political power, and factionalism among members of the same political party, has led to those who want to cling to power, and those who desperately want to get their hands on it, to resort to hiring hitmen or assassins to eliminate their competition." In other words, factional battles for power within political parties create a situation where individuals resort to extreme measures of killing one another, to avoid tough competition towards their ascension to power.

Isike (2019) points out that corruption and factionalism are the two common factors that could lead to the demise of the ANC, especially if nothing is done to address these issues. This suggests that corruption and factionalism are endemic within the ruling party (the ANC). In this regard, the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (2020) mentions that power struggles with the ANC have created fear and uncertainty among its followers, as well as members, because some of the community leaders are scared to accept nominations for leadership positions within the ANC. In fact, factionalism within the ANC gained traction in 2005, shortly after the removal of Jacob Zuma as Deputy President, due to corruption charges brought against him by the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA). Nevertheless, it must be stated that due to the factional battles within the ANC, the Congress of the People (Cope) emerged in 2008 from the ANC (Sarakinsky & Fakir, 2015). Factionalism became apparent due to internal rivalry for the top position in the ANC in the

run-up to the Polokwane Conference in December 2008, where former President Jacob Zuma was elected as the leader of the ANC (Bruce, 2013). As a matter of fact, between 2015 and 2016, about 130 people, including some councilors, were murdered in different parts of KwaZulu-Natal because of intra-party conflict or factionalism (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2020). De Haas (2016) reveals that intra-party conflict also emerged within the ANC branches prior to the 2016 local government elections, concerning nomination processes and leadership positions. The arguments put forward above indicate that intra-party conflict, mistrust and betrayal contribute to the endless political conflicts, consummating in the deplorable deaths of some party members.

3.3 Competition for Limited Resources

There is a blurred line of demarcation between killings that occur due to rivalry for positions and those that happen because of struggle over resources (Krelekrele, 2018). Be that as it may, De Haas (2020) argues that political killings could be linked to the struggle for limited scarce resources and positions. Furthermore, De Haas (2020) notes that there is an increased level of political killings towards elections, especially the local government elections, because individuals view councilor positions as a vehicle for lucrative wages and access to resources. In support of this view, Bruce (2013) postulates that a political office is seen as a source of great influence, which may enable a leader to use political influence to assist close relatives to secure employment and houses. At the same time, relationships of patronage are established through the use of political favours, which also guarantee political leaders of long-term relationships of obligation with their benefactors. Moreover, Krelekrele (2018) highlights that some witnesses that appeared before the Moerane Commission of Inquiry testified that political killings were fuelled by disputes over tenders. Fierce competition for tenders and other financial resources emerges in a political sphere because of "my turn to eat has come" syndrome.

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime (2020) points out that approximately 60 people were killed during the 2016 local government elections in KwaZulu-Natal only, reflecting a catastrophic state of political turbulence. Manipulation of leadership positions can create an unfavourable political atmosphere, where internal battles

for power may result in regrettable losses of life. In agreement with this assertion, Krelekrele (2018) argues: "When positions within the organisation are available through manipulation mostly based on factions, it becomes a factor of potential violence, which sometimes develops into full violence." This explains that a possible strong competitor in the political space, especially within political parties, can easily be killed to minimize or weaken the competing group. As an alternative to political murder, the issue of manipulation of votes or nominations for positions of leaderships also comes to the fore, as one of the tactics used within political parties by members who vie for positions.

3.4 Proliferation of Illegal Firearms

"Sixteen people are murdered with a gun every day in South Africa" (Gun-Free South Africa, 2016). Increased access to dangerous weapons, such as guns, contributes to high levels of political violence, in which case people are killed. Beri (2000) postulates that easy access to arms threatens the socio-political stability in South Africa. Unfortunately, the province of KwaZulu-Natal has, in the past, been used as a base for offloading dangerous weapons (Krelekrele, 2018). For example, the former police force commander, Colonel Eugene de Kock, used to supply deadly weapons, such as AK-47s, hand grenades, light machine guns, ammunitions, mines and RPG-7s to senior officials of the IFP (Krelekrele, 2018). According to Beri (2000), the reason for supplying the IFP with arms between 1990 and 1994 was primarily to destabilize the democratic processes and render the ANC weak.

Ineffective disarmament strategies after peace talks in most Southern African countries has led to proliferation and circulation of arms, which found their way into other countries, such as South Africa (Beri, 2000). Furthermore, Beri (2000) argues that when hidden arms caches are discovered and confiscated, there is poor control over such weapons. In other words, the control mechanisms are extremely poor as some of the weapons could be sold at low prices. Contrary to the view that most arms flow into South Africa from neighbouring countries, Gun-Free South Africa (2016) argues that evidence suggests that there are more guns in circulation in South Africa, such that some of them are smuggled out of South Africa to neighbouring countries. There are numerous factors that contribute towards an increased number on guns that are used illegally,

although they were purchased legally. Firstly, individuals who are not fit and proper to own a firearm are issued with permits and licences, which reflect a lack of effective enforcement of the Firearms Control Act, corruption and fraud. Secondly, theft and loss of firearms contribute to increased levels of illegal weapons in South Africa, because at least between 15 and 18 guns are lost daily. Nevertheless, Snodgrass (2019) acknowledges that there are numerous diverse sources of weapons, some of which are legal and illegal, but extremely difficult to monitor their circulation. Sadly enough, when there is poor enforcement of legislation governing firearms and no accountability for guns in possession of institutions as well as individuals, it will constantly be easier for assassins to commit murder, in which case politicians or supporters of political parties will be victims.

4. Possible Measures to Curtail Political Killings in South Africa

Due to the extent and incessant political killings in South Africa, it will be vital for the government to put strong measures in place to curtail killings and advance democracy in South Africa. Some of the measures that could be put in place are examined individually below.

4.1 Review Eligibility for Municipal Councilors

There are no specific minimum qualifications for one to become a councilor in South Africa. "Every citizen who is qualified to vote for a particular municipality may stand for elections in that municipality" (De Visser & Steytler, 2016:15). There are few exceptional circumstances that may prevent individuals from voting, which suggests that such individuals may not stand for elections. The following category of individuals may not stand for elections or exercise their rights to vote: persons who have been disqualified from the National Assembly; unreliable insolvents; persons declared of unsound mental state by a South African court; persons previously convicted and sentenced to more than 12 months in prison without the option of a fine (De Visser & Steytler, 2016). Clearly, conflict over leadership positions, such as councilor, could be attributed to simple eligibility criteria to stand for votes as a councilor candidate in a municipality. Professor Paulus Zulu, of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, indicated that since individuals do not need any qualifications to stand as a councilor, this has created a

situation where people kill one another for coveted positions (Olifant, 2017). Perhaps as a measure to reduce conflicts and killings over positions, it would be necessary to review the eligibility criteria for a municipal councilor. Such a change should include a minimum post-matric educational qualification. Regarding education, Thebe (2017) indicates that education is critical for enhancing the intellectual capacity and growth of political leaders. Professor Paulus Zulu, of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, told the Moerane Commission in 2017 that since anyone can stand for a position of councilor, it is the primary driver for political violence. He argued before the commission that setting an educational qualification as a requirement to be a councilor could reduce the number of political killings. Professor Zulu said before the commission that "there was more competition for positions of councilor than was the case in the national assembly or provincial legislature" (Olifant, 2017).

4.2 Introduce Legislation and Special Courts for Political Offences

Currently, South Africa does not have a specific legislation that clearly defines political crime and the elements thereof. Given the extent of political killings in South Africa, as explained above, it would perhaps be prudent to ensure that politically motivated murder is one of the crimes that ought to be classified as political crime and be prosecuted expeditiously through special courts. This is because political killings threaten democracy, safety, peace and security in South Africa. Notably, South Africa has several special courts that deal with matters relating to specific legal domains, for example, Electoral Court, Labour Courts, Land Claims Courts and Tax Courts (DSC Attorneys, 2020). Unfortunately, South Africa does not have any special court that deals with political crimes, in particular, political killings. Whilst murder is generally seen to be one of the serious crimes in South Africa, it is also evident that dealing with political killings is increasingly becoming an ongoing challenge in the country.

4.3 Establish Special Investigative Units for Political Offences

In 2018, President Cyril Ramaphosa initiated the formation of a national inter-ministerial investigative task team to deal with political killings in South Africa, with specific focus on KwaZulu-Natal as a hotspot

area. Unfortunately, the success of this investigative unit is not yet evident, because it has been faced with allegations of making selective arrests, making it weaker to address the scourge of political killings (De Haas, 2020). In Krelekrele's (2018) assessment of investigations into political killings, the manner in which the police handled some of the cases considered to be politically motivated suggests that investigations were ineffective. For instance, in 2019, the National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP), Shamila Batohi, expressed great concern over the manner in which the murder case of former ANC Youth League (ANCYL) secretary general and Unzimkhulu councillor, Sindiso Magaqa, was handled by the police investigators. The suspects were reportedly arrested, detained and charged without adequate evidence, but they were subsequently acquitted when charges against them were withdrawn in court (Harper, 2019).

Bruce (2013) expresses a great concern over investigations and convictions relating to political killings, because in cases where ordinary party members of political parties are killed, there seems to be less interest than killings where prominent political leaders are involved. Furthermore, Bruce (2013) believes that to deter incidents of political killings, high quality and independent police investigations would be required. Quality and independent investigations require policemen and women who are well-trained, competent, skilled, committed and have clean criminal records. Contrary to this view, the Minister of Police, Bheki Cele, reported that approximately 27 police officials in the Crime Intelligence had criminal records (Krelekrele, 2018). This suggests that investigations into various cases of political killings could be easily compromised when less credible police investigators are involved.

Although political killings predominantly occur in the KwaZulu-Natal Province, it is important to prevent such incidents from spreading to other provinces in the same scale in which they are happening within KwaZulu-Natal. Nevertheless, there is complete lack of proper coordination and coherence with regards to investigations among the key role players in the security cluster, especially the national intelligence and crime intelligence, reflecting great weaknesses in the criminal justice system (Phakathi, 2019). Furthermore, Phakathi (2019) postulates that crime intelligence has been unable to analyse, process and use collected evidence to avert or resolve political killings in South Africa. Be that as it may,

these issues raised above need to be addressed decisively, in order to ensure effective investigations into political killings and prevention thereof.

4.4 Institute Political Education

Boaduo and Boaduo (2014) contend that political education has the potential of empowering and transforming individuals into social assets in their communities, while also introducing efficient and effective change in the society. During the 54th ANC National Conference, the leadership of the ANC, together with its members, resolved to establish the OR Tambo School of Leadership to advance political education, in which case members could be empowered to address multifarious challenges facing the ANC (Mabasa, 2018). However, the progress made in terms of promoting political education amongst the cadres of the ANC is not obvious. Similarly, in 2020, the EFF Student Command launched the Online Political School in an effort to disseminate political education that would focus on the following key issues, namely: ideological perspective; organisational understanding; gender, sexual orientation and the intersectionality of ideas; managing structures of a mass-based student movement and, towards free, quality, decolonised and well-resourced education (Samuels, 2020). It is not yet known whether the Online Political School has achieved its intended goals. In the absence of political education, people cannot comprehend, beyond their own self-interest, how society functions, because it is through political education that one can be able to fathom and interpret the present events as they unfold (Zulu, 2021).

Zulu (2021) suggests that political education is indispensable in understanding the socio-political and economic challenges confronting the citizenry. Mabasa (2018) mentions that political education will "promote good governance by producing ethical leadership that is not obsessed with crass-materialism but passionate in serving its people with dignity and patriotism." Clearly, without political education, it could be extremely difficult to achieve a situation where leaders can lead the society with great degrees of integrity and dignity. In addition to this view, Thebe (2017:126) accentuates that "political education should be deeply rooted in humanitarianism which means that it should be taught in a way that has value, based on professionalism and ethics laden." This suggests that through political education, political leaders and members within

the various structures of political organisations in South Africa should learn an appropriate ethics code. Ethics should not only be understood in the context of enhancing transparency, responsiveness, professionalism and accountability, but should be also apprehended in the context of respect of fellow human beings' rights to live, thereby refraining from connivance in political killings. According to Boaduo and Boaduo (2014), political education plays a vital role in shaping the behaviour of politicians, but it is equally important for conscientising ordinary citizens about their immediate conditions, so that they can hold political leaders accountable for their actions or inactions.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has discussed the sad state of political killings in South Africa by applying the Theory of Self-Control to understand the phenomenon. The Theory of Self-Control vehemently argues that individuals with low levels of self-control are highly susceptible to performing deviant behaviour, since they easily develop a tendency to ignore negative consequences associated with egregious conduct. Interestingly, among the key reasons for political killings in South Africa, factionalism, competition for resources, political intolerance and proliferation of illegal arms were identified as main contributors to the killings. The South African government has not been able to decisively address issues that contribute to political killings in the country, despite the fact that these killings may eventually pose a major threat to democratic stability, safety and security. There is no doubt that a country ravaged by political killings could easily create great political uncertainty, which turn a country into a war zone. Nevertheless, South Africa needs to explore various avenues towards addressing the scourge of political killings. The South African government may need to revise the eligibility criteria for individuals to qualify as councillors in their respective wards or municipal jurisdictions, since this could contribute to the reduction of death rates among politicians towards the local government elections. At the same time, the country may need to introduce a special legislation and introduce some special courts to deal expeditiously with politically motivated killings. This should not be viewed as special treatment of political cases while other murder cases are not investigated and prosecuted, but should rather be seen as an effort towards stabilising the country's political circumstances and safeguarding democracy. Equally

important, independent special investigative units should be established to deal with political killings. These units should be free from any form of political interference, to function effectively and efficiently. Notably, political parties will need to take some initiatives and introduce political education among its members, to inculcate moral and ethical behaviour. Therefore, it is evident, indeed, that political killings in South Africa constitute a major political conundrum that requires not only political solutions, but also psychosocial and legal solutions.

References

- Akers, R.L. 1991. Self-control as a general theory of crime. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 7(2):201-211.
- Beri, R. 2000. Coping with small arms threat in South Africa. *Strategic Analysis*, 24(1). Available at: https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa_apr00ber02.html. Accessed 29 August 2022.
- Boaduo, N.A. & Boaduo, S.M.B. 2014. Introduction of political education for the propagation of democracy in Africa: The perspective of African academics, part II. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 6(7):225-237.
- Bruce, D. 2013. Political killings in South Africa: A provincial concern? *SA Crime Quarterly*, 45:13-24.
- Bruce, D. 2014. Political killings in South Africa: The ultimate intimidation. *Policy Brief 64*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.
- City Press. 2021. Say no to political intolerance. News24, 26 September. Available at: <https://www.news24.com/citypress/voices/editorial-say-no-to-political-intolerance-20210926>. Accessed 28 August 2022.
- De Haas, M. 2016. The killing fields of KZN: Local government elections, violence and democracy in 2016. *SA Crime Quarterly*, 57:43-53.
- De Haas, M. 2020. South Africa fails to get to the bottom of killings in KwaZulu-Natal. *The Conversation*, 21 January. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/south-africa-fails-to-get-to-the-bottom-of-killings-in-kwazulu-natal-128167>. Accessed 18 July 2022.
- De Visser, J. & Steytler, N. 2016. Electing councillors: A guide to municipal elections. Available at: https://www.cogta.gov.za/cgta_2016/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Electing-Councillors-A-Guide-to-Municipal-Elections.pdf. Accessed 28 August 2022.
- DSC Attorneys. 2020. *Types of courts in South Africa*. Available at: <https://www.golegal.co.za/types-courts-south-africa/>. Accessed 28 August 2022.
- Gibson, C.L. 2010. Gottfredson, M.R. & Hirschi, T. Self-Control Theory. In Francis T. Cullen & Pamela Wilcox (eds), *Encyclopedia of Criminological Theory*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Gibson, J.L. & Gouws, A. 1998. Political intolerance and ethnicity: Investigating social identity. *Indicator South Africa*, 15(3): 15-20.
- Gibson, J.L. & Gouws, A. 2000. Social identities and political intolerance: Linkages within the South African mass public. *American Journal of Political Science*, 44(2):278-292.
- Gibson, J.L. & Gouws, A. 2002. *Overcoming intolerance in South Africa: Experiments in democratic persuasion*. Cape Town: Cambridge University Press.
- Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime. 2020. KwaZulu-Natal's killing fields and the threat to South Africa's democracy. *Daily Maverick*, 05 April. Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-04-05-kwazulu-natals-killing-fields-and-the-threat-to-south-africas-democracy/#gsc.tab=0>. Accessed 17 July 2022.
- Gun-Free South Africa (GFSA). 2016. *Gun violence and prevention in South Africa*. Available at: <https://www.saferspaces.org.za/understand/entry/gun-violence>. Accessed 29 August 2022.
- Harper, P. 2019. Batohi wants to know why Ndobe case flopped. *Mail & Guardian*. 28 March. Available at: <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-03-28-batohi-wants-to-know-why-ndobe-case-flopped/>. Accessed 28 August 2022.
- Higgins, G.E. 2007. Digital piracy, Self-Control Theory, and Rational Choice: An examination of the role of value. *International Journal of Cyber Criminology*, 1(1):33-55.
- Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). 2009. Electoral Commission on political intolerance and violence during elections 2009. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/electoral-commission-political-intolerance-and-violence-during-elections-2009>. Accessed 28 August 2022.
- Isike, C. 2019. Factionalism and corruption could kill the ANC – unless it kills both first. *The Conversation*. 12 May. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/factionalism-and-corruption-could-kill-the-anc-unless-it-kills-both-first-116924>. Accessed 28 August 2022.
- Krelekrele, T. 2018. *Briefing Paper 469: Political Violence in KwaZulu-Natal*. Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference. Cape Town: Parliamentary Liaison Office.
- Mabasa, A.N. 2018. Political education will halve the ANC's challenges. *Daily Maverick*. 17 December. Available at: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2018-12-17-political-education-will-halve-the-ancs-challenges/>. Accessed 28 August 2022.
- Mbhanyele, S. 2022. What drives South Africa's political violence? *Mail & Guardian*, 14 March. Available at: <https://mg.co.za/opinion/2022-03-14-what-drives-south-africas-political-violence/>. Accessed 28 August 2022.
- Morley, R.H. 2018. The intersection of Self-Control Theory, Objective Self-Awareness, and Mindfulness. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 6(2):152-169.
- Olifant, N. 2017. Qualifications should be mandatory for political positions. *BusinessLive*. 18 July. Available at: <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/politics/2017-07-18->

- qualifications-should-be-mandatory-for-political-positions/. Accessed 28 August 2022.
- Opp, K. 2020. *Analytical criminology: Integrating explanations of crime and deviant behaviour*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Phakathi, M. 2019. Rethinking political violence in post-apartheid KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. *Ubuntu: Journal of Conflict and Social Transformation*, 8(1):99-119.
- Samuels, S. 2020. EFF Student Command launches political school. *Careersportal*. 31 March. Available at: <https://www.careersportal.co.za/education/eff-student-command-launches-political-school>. Accessed 29 August 2022.
- Sarakinsky, I. & Fakir, E. 2015. A brief history of factionalism and new party formation and decline in South Africa: The case of COPE. *Journal of African Elections*, 14(1):60-84.
- Snodgrass, L. 2019. Illegal guns fuel violent crime, wreak deadly havoc in South Africa. *The Conversation*. 14 October. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/illegal-guns-fuel-violent-crime-wreak-deadly-havoc-in-south-africa-49006>. Accessed 29 August 2022.
- Thebe, T.P. 2017. Political education for good governance in South Africa's local government and communities. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9(5):123-135.
- Zulu, A. 2021. Political education is the key to building the SA we want. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/opinion/political-education-is-key-to-building-the-sa-we-want-02f9e4d9-7db9-480c-9bdd-574a88347032>. Accessed 28 August 2022.