

Message to the Portuguese Community in South Africa, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear friends, Portuguese in South Africa,  
Especially in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng

On Tuesday last week, when the riots in South Africa were raging I sent an appeal to prudence amidst the social explosion that was taking place in the country. I urged all to abide by the guidelines from the Authorities and to exercise the utmost precaution: if you didn't need to, you shouldn't leave your house; and those were days when it was best not to open the shops, stores or other establishments.

Shocked as we are by what we witnessed and worried as we may justifiably be by the turn of events, I believe that yet again South Africa has overcome a very severe challenge. I regret the loss of life and property outside our community. And I regret the serious damage suffered by a number of Portuguese in the country – with whom we have been establishing contact, through the Consulate-General in Johannesburg.

The situation has meanwhile improved, the clean-up has started, circulation is resuming, the Authorities are indicating that instigators will be brought to book – we wish South Africa all success.

We are aware of the seriousness of the fright and of the scale of the damage. There are grievous losses for the affected businesses. Our consular team – which is and was always active – sought proactively to identify without delay the affected businesses that we would have gotten word about. We did speak to a few of those, to give them a word of comfort and to express our interest. We are gathering the information that they may wish to pass on to us; we'll have those data at hand for the use that may be possible for the benefit of the affected and inasmuch as they may desire it.

To those that suffered damages and whom we haven't contacted yet, I leave here the invitation to come forward and reach for us at the contacts already indicated that are active, have actually been used and aren't overloaded (Consulate General in Johannesburg emergency line: 0783446495; Consular Emergency Office: gec@mne.pt ; +351961706472). For current matters, the network is operating (in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town), albeit with constraints imposed by COVID19 – e.g., by previous appointment, at reduced occupancy rate in our premises, wearing mask, with distancing and following the well-known hygiene protocols.

Now is the time to cautiously return to life, keeping a close watch on developments in the country. Our consular network was and is open. You may reach for us.

Pretoria, July 19, 2021

Manuel Carvalho  
Ambassador of Portugal  
in South Africa