



**PRESS RELEASE  
NO EMBARGO**

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**AL JAMA-AH condemns the victimization of 97 vulnerable Ruyterwacht Residents by profit hungry property corporation:**

Al Jama-ah Party is deeply concerned by the legally questionable actions of a Property corporation which is hauling 97 vulnerable Ruyterwacht residents to court to force access their homes under debatable circumstances. The majority of these residents are pensioners.

The 97 lessees are part of hundreds currently involved in a dispute to have their security of tenure protected within the historic social housing establishment. The ownership of the homes, which are viewed to constitute social housing units and which appears to have been owned by the Municipality at some stage, saw ownership thereof being passed hand to hand between a 'not-for-profit' company; the latter has been tasked with managing the state's social housing projects, and which is alleged to now be "owned" by the corporation.

According to a resident that it is impossible for this corporation to own the homes because ownership can only lawfully be passed upon obtaining the required certificates of compliance. There has been no obtainment of these by either party and the lessees now face the inequitable and unjust evictions.

This is a situation that can only be described as part of a discriminatory gentrification process that is taking place in Cape Town's Ruyterwacht area. On Friday, 26 July 2024, these struggling residents will appear in the Cape High Court.

Many other properties are being auctioned off despite the call by the National Department of Human Settlements, which is wholly supported by Al Jama-ah Party, for a stay of all the evictions from Communicare managed and allegedly owned properties; this call is being made while a forensic investigation into this company's activities and its management of the social housing stock across Cape Town is being conducted.

This court case represents one step in a process to evict, dispossess, and displace residents who have lived in the area from as early as the 1990s. Many lessees are the children of persons who resided on the properties since prior to that.

In May this year, Al Jama-ah, as one of the applicants, applied for a 'Stay-in-Execution' which was granted by the High Court. Communicare, however, went ahead with

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Room 6050, 6th Floor, 90 Plein Street, Cape Town, 8001 | Tel: +27 21 403 2911 | Fax: +27 21 86 684 8625 | [www.aljama.co.za](http://www.aljama.co.za)



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the auction in flagrant disregard of the court order; and this despite having had prior knowledge of the proceedings.

“Members of this, and several other communities are being stripped of their dignity, their security and their sense of safety. An elderly couple who was of the earlier evictees were dropped with their belongings on an open field and left desolate, without a court order. Most, if not all evictions, are further effected in the heart of winter, and some had been ordered by the Magistrates Court in Goodwood during the Covid period, when a moratorium was placed on all evictions.

“This lawlessness by companies and corporations, and their exploitative and abusive practices must stop forthwith. This current attempt is nothing but an abuse of court process by these corporations. We are seeing Apartheid style violations of the rights of these poor vulnerable communities,” says Adv Fairouz Nagia of Al Jama-ah, who is assisting the residents.

Companies such as Communicare and a few others do not seem to bother about the status of these vulnerable communities. In Salt River, for example, many families were also unashamedly evicted amidst terrible weather conditions and challenging circumstances.

Al Jama-ah thus appeals to the government as well as all our NGOs and FBOs to assist these unprotected groups so that these companies do not take advantage of the very assailable families and individuals; their basic humans rights are trampled upon, and their dignity is deeply affected.

**In solidarity with the residents, Al Jama-ah supporters will hold a picket against gentrification and forced removals outside the Cape High Court on Friday, 26 July 2024 from 09:00.**

For interviews contact:

**Ms Sinazo Mtshengu**  
**Cell: 078 512 3186**