

# 'Stand Firm Against Crime'

AfriForum recently launched their 'Stand Firm Against Crime' campaign during a conference on community safety with a comprehensive strategy on how communities can mobilise themselves against crime (November 14).

This strategy comprise over six steps that were developed after a year-long study on how community networks function, Cornelius Jansen van Rensburg, Head of Community Affairs at AfriForum explained.

"The aim of this research was to create a basic framework for community safety structures and propose a basic framework for best practices for community safety structures. A diverse group of respondents participated in the study. From rich to poor, black and white were involved in order to

create a document that provides steps explaining how to make communities safer." Sean Else and his group 34 Grade Suid, who supports the campaign, introduced their new song "Staan Vas" ("Stand Firm") during the conference. This inspiring song motivates communities to stand firm against crime and come forth with positive actions against offenses, Else said. "Only when ordinary South Africans roll up their sleeves and get involved in their own communities will we be able to turn the tide against crime," he added.

The findings of the research are summarised in a comprehensive report, which was discussed by Unisa's Prof Rudolph Zinn and Nantes Kelder, Head of Investigations at AfriForum. The research iden-

tified important aspects such as management, financial sustainability and active participation by individuals within a community as key success factors. However, interaction between safety and liaison between community safety-structures has been identified as an existing gap. "When organised communities are able to establish closer links with each other and work together more effectively, we will be able to effectively combat crime," said Zinn.

The Stand Firm Against Crime strategy comprises the following six steps:

1. The establishment of a nationwide network of community safety structures;
2. The development of community-centred security activities;
3. AfriForum's independent investigation unit;
4. Active participation in community po-

licing forums;

5. Administrative support; and
6. Creating a communication network and platforms.

AfriForum also launched a website, [www.veilighedsforum.co.za](http://www.veilighedsforum.co.za), which will serve as a dynamic and interactive platform for communities to communicate with each other. The site also contains the findings of the survey and contacts of organised security structures across the country, thus creating a directory of community safety structures. Existing and prospective security structures can also register on this platform.

According to Jansen van Rensburg, AfriForum plans to play an active role in mobilising communities against crime. "When you are involved with your local community safety structure, you save a life," Jansen van Rensburg reiterated.



Prof. Rudolph Zinn of Unisa discusses the findings of a year-long study on how community safety structures work. (Photo: Tiaan Fölscher)



Nantes Kelder, Head of Investigations at AfriForum, discusses the findings of a year-long study on how community safety structures work. (Photo: Tiaan Fölscher)



Cornelius Jansen van Rensburg, Head of Community Affairs at AfriForum, explains the new six-step strategy for communities to fight crime together. (Photo: Tiaan Fölscher)



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