

## **The scar Cape Town cannot ignore! Restitution eludes District 6 twenty-two years into South African democracy.**

Several hundred people, forcibly evicted from their homes in District 6, Cape Town, in 1966, attended the event advertised below. Occasions such as this re-unite a now elderly community who were displaced to the Cape Flats in different apartheid-style townships. Three thousand people belong to D6WC. They also meet to protest and re-assert restitution for the loss of their homes, their land and more, 22 years into democracy.

Music, with influence from the countries east to us, which they brought with them to this country as slaves centuries earlier, provided the backdrop to the gathering. Cape Malay food additionally decorated this rich tapestry.

Several speakers called for renewed action to demand from all three spheres of Government, the City of Cape Town, the Western Cape Provincial Government and National Government, that restitution cannot be further postponed and that the land they once lived on cannot serve the drive from developers for gentrified complexes. Pain and anger rests deep in this community as it does in countless other communities across our fractured land.

Below the invite to this gathering, is the address I delivered on the occasion.

Horst Kleinschmidt



WORKING COMMITTEE  
NPC REG. NO. 2013/169740/08

**MAKING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY A REALITY**

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### **INVITATION TO PUBLIC MEETING**

**Venue: Blackpool Sports Complex-Shelly Rd- Salt River**

**Date & Time: Saturday 27 August 2016 - From 9am till 1pm**

### **AGENDA: LAND REFORM & RESTITUTION**

In the wake of the outcomes of the recent Municipal Elections - and the Constitutional Court judgment on Thursday 28 July 2016 which ruled the Land Restitution Rights Amendment Act of 2014 as invalid-; serious questions are begging to be asked:

1. How do these outcomes affect the people of District 6 and other communities who claimed for restitution between 1995 to 1998 - as well as those who claimed from July 2014?
2. Importantly; Is the Department of Rural Development & Land Reform the only entity responsible for restitution and land reform?

Or

**\*Should the City of Cape Town as well as Provincial Government - as major stakeholders and custodians of vacant state-owned land, also be held accountable for non-deliverables - especially in view of the "vision" of the overall land reform program?**

**Please join us and other major stakeholders who will participate in this lively debate about where we are going and how to pave the way forward, step by step - brick by brick.**

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**Address to the public meeting at the District 6 Working Committee gathering,  
held on 27 August 2016.**

Horst Kleinschmidt:

Thank you Shahied Ajam for inviting me. Salaam, good morning!

As you will no doubt surmise, I am not someone who was evicted from District 6. I was never evicted from anywhere in South Africa. I do not know how it feels to be forcibly evicted from my house, from my home. I have never had my belongings loaded on a lorry by people I don't know or employed. I have never been told where I must live. I have never been dumped and told to live amongst people I did not choose to live amongst. I have never been told what work or job I cannot do.

Had I been classified anything other than 'white' my life would have happened very differently.

I say these things and I add: I am similar in age to many of you whom these things, these evictions happened to; who were at the receiving end of racial politics.

In 1969, I worked in an office in Wolroy House, in Buitenkant Street on the edge of District 6. I had come from Johannesburg to spend a year in the offices of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS). This was because I had been elected to high office of the national student body. Here I saw the devastation of District 6. It was one block away from my work.

At our annual, mainly 'white', student conferences, we passed resolutions and made speeches condemning the apartheid government for its cruel and racist policy. It changed nothing that happened to you, the people of District 6.

We are here, 50 years after the District 6 evictions. - Half a century later! Nearly two generations! And justice and restitution has not been done. This is a disgrace and it is a shame. The gaping wound of District 6 stares all Cape Town citizens in the face every single day. What is your hurt is our shame!

Recently I learnt that the original 150 hectares that used to be District 6, has been nibbled at, no, was gobbled away, by private developers, and by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. - All decent Cape Town citizens need to know that 150 hectares that used to be District 6, has shrunk to 42 hectares, to less than 1/3 of what it was. This is what democratic South Africa has done with our land and your rights to restitution. To 'shrink' your land is betrayal, it is a trust broken, by those in the new

South Africa who should know better. Let us not blame apartheid only; much more directly, and now: we need to blame National Government, Provincial Government and Local Government. – The people we have elected, be they ANC or DA, they have failed you – and I want to add: they have failed me.

I have not forgotten what I saw here in 1969 – the broken land, the rubble that was former houses and homes. I have not forgotten the plaque on the wall of the Methodist church in Buitenkant Street, the ‘Plaque of Shame’, reminding all who care to read it, what injustice was committed here, and that we have failed to rectify, to atone for, to give back with interest this injustice, 22 years into democracy.

In the despair to not have your land and your history further alienated by developers and CPUT, you call for the remaining 42 hectares to be secured from further alien development. – This needs to happen urgently because the villains of the peace are knocking on the City doors, to reduce the remaining land even further.

Our country, our City, our polity, 22 years into political freedom remains fragile, fractured and restless. This is because the promises of restitution, - physical, institutional and nonphysical have not materialised. The shape of the old order has re-asserted itself in an adapted new guise. Those who benefitted from apartheid have not joined the common table where we seek equity, égalité and fraternity.

White people in general, but also the many new rich from other communities, have turned their back on the incomplete project to dismantle apartheid and the inequality it created.

You have shouted, you have pleaded; you have been patient and ever gracious – all seemingly to no avail. It is high time that all decent folk of Cape Town stand up and declare their support, their solidarity, with you - in word and in deed!

There is a conversation in Cape Town. It takes place between white people who feel complicit, albeit indirectly, for the benefit they derived from apartheid. This benefit is material in part, but it is also about education, about attitude, about an in-built confidence, about talking down to the ‘others’.

These people are sincere and they know that more has to be done to dismantle what apartheid left us with. They know that a new crisis is brewing. It is about the absence of restitution, the unmet promises of Government, of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, of the financial empire that ‘Rhodes’ et al and many others command to this day. The discussion is about the unfinished business of our past. - The divide between rich and poor is untenable and will lead to destructive conflict, sooner than we think. All the signs are there.

Atonement and acknowledgement is one element enlightened whites have to speak about; not amongst themselves, but in the open – when they face and talk to you whose injustice has not been righted. The other element is material. Land and accumulated wealth, derived through discrimination, continues to provide white South Africans with an advantage you cannot, in the present system, catch up with.

Now, - I know that despite its present crises, the capitalist system will be with us for some time yet, but the land that was yours, whether you owned it or rented it, cannot become a means for the empowerment, once more, of the elite, the old ‘white’ elite, or the new elite.

The decent people of Cape Town, described as 'white' in the old order, can and must be called upon to do one decent thing at this hour: support your claim to have your heritage not further encumbered. I want today to speak to you about support and solidarity to ensure your land is not further encroached upon. Your quest is be our quest! When you stand up, we must stand up with you, not only in word, but in deed!

I am a committee member of the recently registered NPO (Not for Profit Organisation), the Active Citizens Alliance of Cape Town – ACACT. I have been authorized to pledge to you that we will make it our business, to stand with you – to join you in the 'trenches' if need be. We are all Cape Townians. We might be described as elderly, but we believe passionately that Cape Town has yet to build the integrated and reconciled City it should become. We are not members of any political party. And we want urgent and radical change that speaks to:

- The justice and restitution that has eluded you for half a century.
- Racially integrated residential areas.
- Class integrated residential areas.
- Real and material sacrifice by those who benefitted from apartheid.
- Solidarity with those who stand up for justice and restitution.
- Collaboration to support your goals in the wider Cape Town community.
- In solidarity, we will act, and listen without prescribing!

Thank you!