



Monitoring and Analysis of Hateful Language in South Africa

Report #3:
May 15, 2019

This report is part of an initiative by PeaceTech Lab to analyze hateful and inflammatory language online in South Africa to mitigate the threat of this language to fuel violence during the election period. The terms discussed come from the Lab's recently published *South Africa Lexicon of Hateful Terms* while the data comes from our *Hate Speech and Election Violence portal*, which is updated regularly. These resources examine terms and phrases that are offensive and inflammatory, are directed towards individuals or groups based on ethnicity, religion, race, gender, national identity, or political affiliation, and may lead to violence.

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Latest Events

On May 8, the South Africa general elections were held, with the African National Congress (ANC) retaining power with a reduced majority after receiving 57.5% of the votes. Ahead of the election, Julius Malema of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) held a campaign rally in Free State. At the rally, Malema said that white people knew the EFF would never kill them and that the EFF was just trying to gain equality for black people. He also asked people to read the EFF's documents and show where they called for the killing of white people. He used the phrases "one settler one bullet" and "kill the whites" but in the context of arguing that the EFF did not support these statements.

In another incident, the Democratic Alliance (DA) reportedly sent messages to residents of Western Cape urging them to vote for the DA to prevent a coalition government between the ANC and EFF. Reports suggest that the DA was fearful of a potential coalition due to the belief that the large proportion of white farmers in Western Cape could lose their land as both the ANC and EFF have supported land expropriation. In the election, the DA retained governance over the Western Cape.

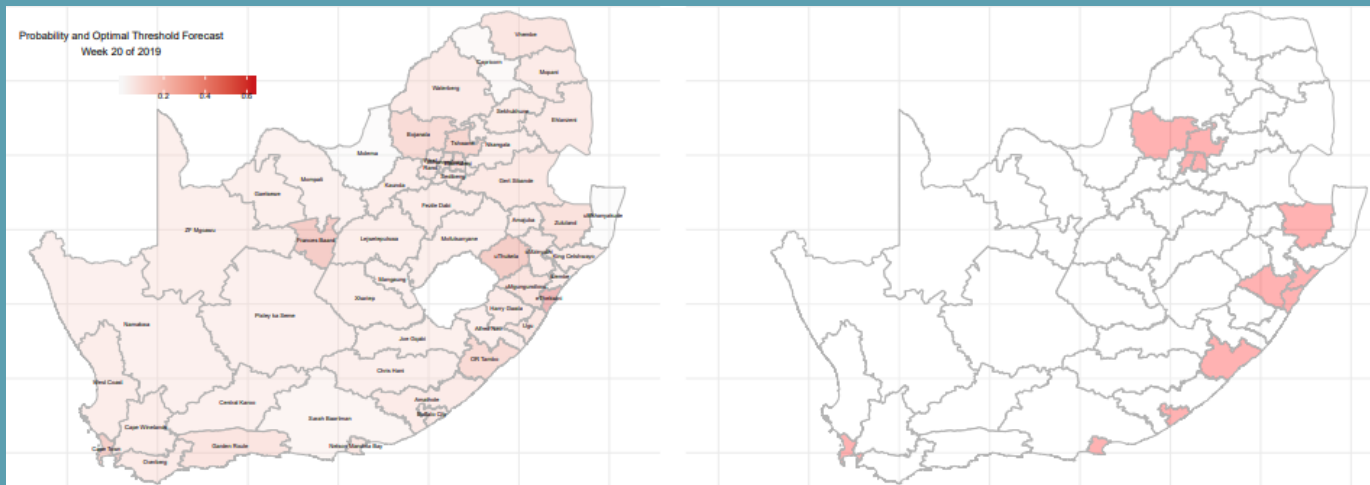
Also in this period, a case was taken to the Human Rights Commission over Black First Land First's (BLF's) slogan "Land or Death." The complaint was taken to the Equality Court and the slogan was ruled as hate speech on May 6th. This received a lot of media attention because it occurred during an election period in which BLF was participating, and because of the ongoing debate in South Africa over what constitutes hate speech.

EARLY WARNING OF CONFLICT

Week of May 14-20

The predictive maps below present the likelihood of each municipality experiencing one or more of the following event types (as classified by ACLED): 1) Violence against Civilians; 2) Battles; 3) Protests or Riots. For the Week of April 30-May 6, PeaceTech Lab's statistical model predicts higher likelihoods of these events in the municipalities shown in darker red on the map on the left. The map on the right applies a probability threshold to forecast which of these municipalities can be expected to experience one or more of these types of events over the next week.

These districts are Bojanala, Buffalo City, the City of Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, eThekweni, iLembe, the City of Johannesburg, Nelson Mandela Bay, OR Tambo, the City of Tshwane, uMgungundlovu, and Zululand.



[Click on the map to visit our Hate Speech and Election Violence data portal for South Africa and read more about this predictive model and our data analytics.](#)



HATEFUL LANGUAGE DATA & ANALYSIS

April 26-May 9

5,537*

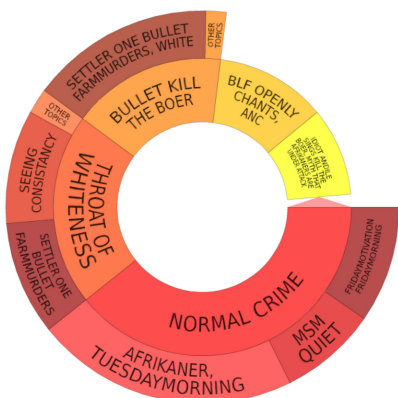
Total Number of Hateful Posts for South Africa for Current Period*

+30%

Change in Hateful Post Volume for Current Period Compared to Previous Two-Week Period

"KILL THE WHITES"

Most Frequently Observed Inflammatory Phrase for Current Period



Trending Topics Linked to Most Frequently Observed Term

During April 26-May 9, the volume of hateful posts increased by about 30% from the previous two weeks. The increase was at least somewhat related to the actions and statements of several political party leaders over the past two weeks. Every time parties such as DA, EFF, FF+ and BLF were in the news, the public took to social media to discuss the issues raised. One contributing factor to the overall increase in hate speech posts was likely the debate on social media comparing previous hate speech cases to the BLF slogan ("Land or Death") case and discussion of whether this phrase is actually hate speech.

The inflammatory phrase that appeared most frequently in the past two weeks was "kill the whites," along with associated phrases such as "kill the farmers." One of the incidents likely contributing to the increased use of these phrases was the campaign rally held by Malema where he used the phrases "kill the whites" and others, but in order to argue that his party does not support these views.

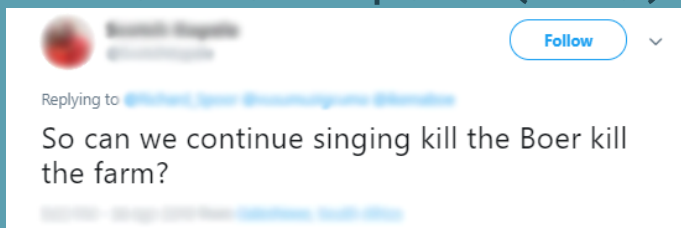
A final issue that influenced the social media discussion this week was the DA's messaging in Western Cape. It fueled a response from social media users with many claiming that Western Cape is full of "land thieves," the third most common phrase this period. Additional hateful terms were also employed by social media users in response to this.

*Number of posts was drawn from Twitter posts monitored via Crimson Hexagon and Facebook posts monitored via Dataminr by human analysts from Media Monitoring Africa.

HATEFUL TERMS & PHRASES SAMPLE POSTS

April 26-May 9

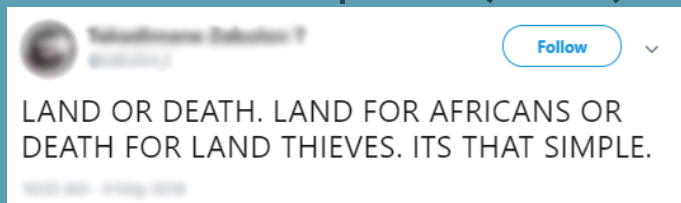
"Kill the Farmer" Sample Post (Twitter)



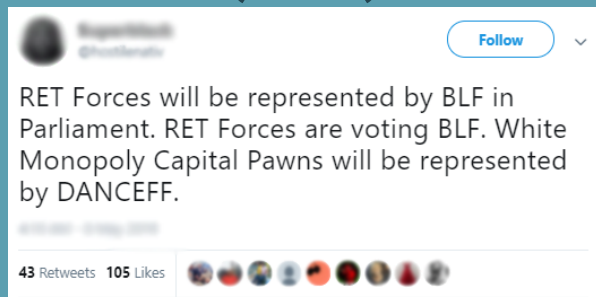
"Kill the Boers" Sample Post (Twitter)



"Land Thief" Sample Post (Twitter)



"White Monopoly Capital" Sample Post (Twitter)



If you have any feedback on this report and/or suggestions of the most useful types of content to include, please email us at info@peacetechnology.org.