



Monitoring and Analysis of Hateful Language in South Africa

Report #6:
June 28, 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.

Latest Events

The ANC party announced that it planned to open a case of crimen injuria against singer Steve Hofmeyr, whose tweets it accused of being “racist and inhumane rants.” This came after Hofmeyr took to twitter, targeting South Africa’s Ambassador to Denmark, Zindzi Mandela and DA Member of Parliament Phumzile Van Damme. Zindzi Mandela had earlier tweeted “Dear Apartheid Apologists, your time is over. You will not rule again. We do not fear you. Finally #TheLandIsOurs” and “Whilst I wine and dine here ... wondering how the world of shivering land thieves is doing #OurLand.” Mandela’s tweets elicited mixed reactions with the DA party calling for her recall if the tweets were proven to be hers. [Zindzi Mandela’s twitter account is not verified].

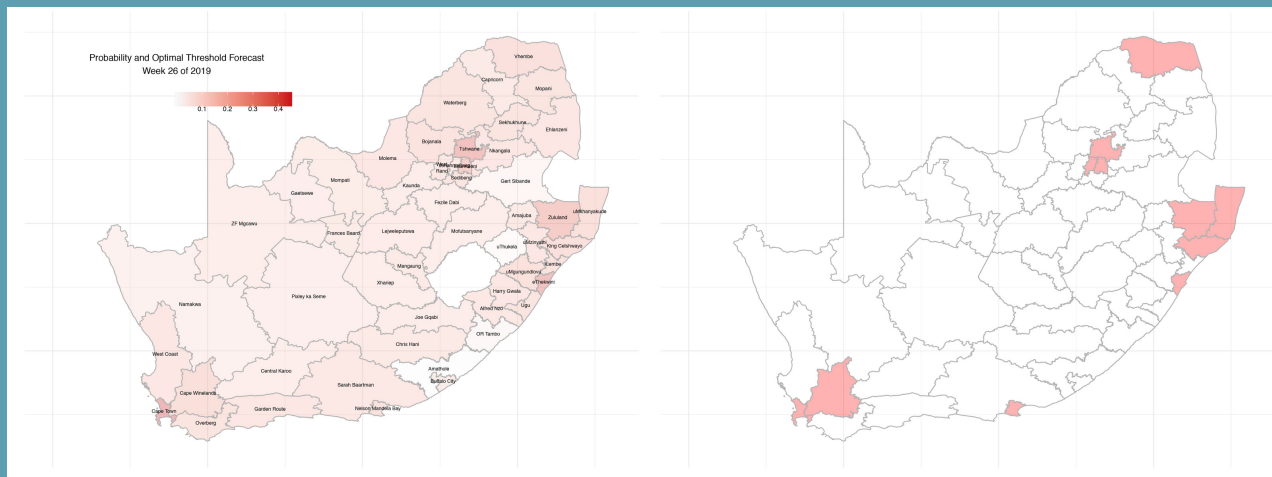
In a related incident, MP Phumzile Van Damme also took to social media to report an alleged racial incident at V & A Waterfront. Van Damme reported that she was pushed by a white person in a store and told “voetsek you black” (get lost you black). Many social media users responded with hateful terms and engaged in discourse around racism.

This period also saw an increase in reporting by media on farm attacks and farm killing stories involving white people. Some media outlets had statistics showing that there allegedly had been nineteen farm attacks, and three farm murders in South Africa for the period 1 to 15 June 2019. These stories receive a lot of attention and reaction from social media users.

EARLY WARNING OF CONFLICT

Week of June 25-July 1

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 June 25-July 1, 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 municipalities are Cape Winelands, the City of Cape Town, Nelson Mandela Bay, eThekweni, Zululand, King Cetshwayo, uMkhanyakude, the City of Tshwane, the City of Johannesburg, the City of Ekurhuleni and Vhembe



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

June 7-20

11,433*

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

+34%

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

"LAND THIEVES"

Most Frequently Observed Inflammatory Term for Current Period



Trending Topics Linked to Most Frequently Observed Term

During June 7-June 20, the volume of hateful posts increased by 34% from the previous two weeks, continuing a consistent upward trend in hateful content post-election. Much of the hateful language conversations are likely connected to the twitter exchange discussed above.

The inflammatory phrase that appeared most frequently in this period was 'Land thieves.' The increased volume of this term is likely related to the tweets by Zindzi Mandela directed to apartheid apologists and Hofmeyr's response to the Ambassador and the DA party MP that led to the hashtags #OurLand and #TheLandIsOurs, trending for a while on social media. This became a larger conversation on the on-going land issue in South Africa. The #OurLand hashtag is currently being used.

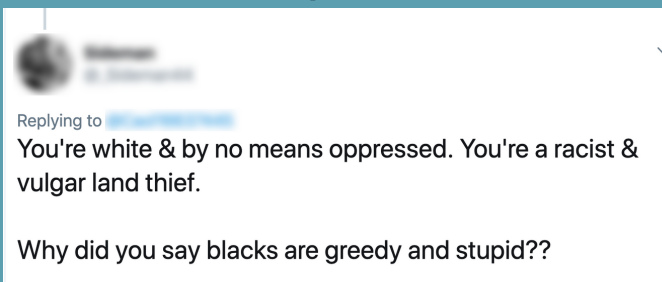
Additionally, during the 2019 State Of the Nation Address (SONA) some social media users complained that the ruling party was only serving the interests of "land thieves." Others seemed mostly put off by President Cyril Ramaphosa's lack of commitment to mentioning "when the land would be taken back" as part of the much awaited land expropriation without compensation.

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

HATEFUL TERMS & PHRASES SAMPLE POSTS

June 7-20

"Land Thief" Sample Post (Twitter)



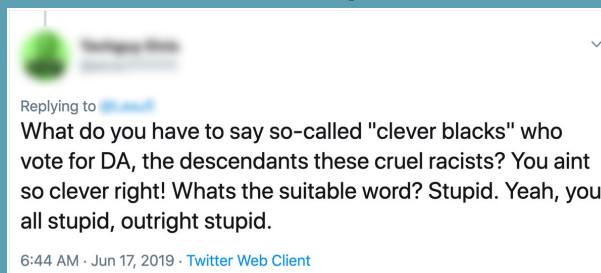
"White Monopoly" Sample Post (Twitter)



"Kaffir" Sample Post (Twitter)



"Clever Blacks" Sample Post (Twitter)



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