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AFRIFORUM WILL OPPOSE VACCINE MANDATES IF IMPLEMENTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

AfriForum

Media Statement

29 November 2021

In a letter to President Cyril Ramaphosa, the civil rights organisation AfriForum today stated that vaccine mandates are unjustifiable violations of personal freedoms and that it will oppose vaccine mandates if implemented by the government. This is in response to the president's address to the nation on 28 November, where he stated that the government has set up a task team that will undertake broad consultations on making vaccination mandatory for specific activities and locations.

In the letter AfriForum highlights how in an address to the nation in February 2021, the president promised that, "I want to be clear, nobody will be forced to take this vaccine, I want to repeat, nobody will be forced to take this vaccine. Nobody will be forbidden from traveling to wherever they want to travel to, including from enrolling at school, or from taking part in any public activity if they have not been vaccinated." Now his administration is considering doing exactly that. Seeing the president go back on this promise is very concerning.

"On the basis of the principle of freedom of choice and constitutional right to bodily autonomy, if the government implements vaccine mandates, AfriForum will take the necessary steps to oppose them," says Ernst Roets, Head of Policy and Action at AfriForum.

"If we support state coercion with matters we personally agree on at the moment, we open the door for the state to be able to impose something on us in the future with which we ourselves may have a problem in principle. State coercion is and remains dangerous, regardless of its subject matter, and we should not be giving the government consent to use it in an increasingly expanded array of situations. Vaccine mandates are unjustifiable in a free society," Roets concludes.