

South Africa: Killing of LGBTI rights defender Thapelo Makhutle
By Front Line Defenders
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On 9 June 2012, two unidentified men attacked and killed LGBTI rights defender Thapelo Makhutle. He was a member and volunteer of LEGBO.

LEGBO is an advocacy group based in Northern Cape which provides support and training to rural LGBTI communities who face stigma and harassment.

Thapelo Makhutle actively spoke out against LGBTI discrimination and conducted workshops with LGBTI youth on human rights, HIV and AIDS and other social issues. He was also a member of the Northern Cape NGO Coalition.

It is reported that in the early hours of 9 June 2012 two unidentified men followed Thapelo Makhutle to his home in Kuruman, in the John Taolo Gaetsewe district of the Northern Cape province. This occurred shortly after an argument between them on Thapelo Makhutle's sexuality. Later in the day, his body was found on his bed, covered with a blanket and with the throat cut wide open. No arrests have so far been made in connection with the killing.

This killing comes in the context of a reported increase in the number of threats and attacks against LGBTI rights defenders and LGBTI people in the province of Northern Cape. Front Line Defenders is deeply saddened by this killing, and expresses grave concern for the security of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex activists in South Africa.

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