

South Africa: Food Emergency Looms Following the Unrest



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Islamic Relief sending trucks of food to Durban tonight and over the weekend from Johannesburg

Tensions remain high in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal but as the violence starts to subside, a food emergency looms due to the disruption of food networks in and out of the province. A day after looters were forced out of major retail areas, lines began forming to purchase the remaining stock at supermarkets and independent grocery stores while delivery can be secured.

“Supermarkets have been closed for days and are now opening with virtually no stock. So many people in Durban, including our own staff, have gone without food for days, as they have been confined to their homes. People are desperate for the basics like bread, milk, baby formula, nappies and medication. And food prices are rocketing.”

“It’s been so traumatic, particularly for those in Durban. So many lives have been lost, including family members of Islamic Relief staff. People have not been sleeping as they are terrified their homes will be broken into. The trauma will stay with them for a long time. People are still living in constant fear and the tension is still really tangible.”

Providing emergency food and essential items to those affected

Islamic Relief South Africa is working closely with partner organisations and community groups to get food and essential items to vulnerable homes affected by the unrest in Durban.

“There is a resounding call for help from the poorer communities in the outskirts of the main cities who will face

the brunt of this unrest. Many people have lost their jobs due to attacks on businesses and unfortunately it will take a long time before they are fully functioning again.”

Islamic Relief is working closely with major stakeholders to transport emergency food relief to Durban. Two truckloads are leaving this evening.

Despite limitations of movement and access restrictions, Islamic Relief South Africa will continue to provide Qurbani meat (for Eid) and food packs for 387 orphans living in the informal settlements in Wyebank, Umbumbulu, Pietermaritzburg and Durban areas.

Pockets of unrest flared up in parts of Johannesburg and were largely controlled by the police. Islamic Relief in Johannesburg will be conducting cleanup operations lead by staff and volunteers.

Islamic Relief is focusing mainly on KwaZulu Natal the worst affected area, but we are closely monitoring other regions for possible flair ups.

One truck arrives in Durban at 9pm this evening (Friday) and another at 10am on Saturday

For more info, interviews and filming requests please contact:

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Press Contacts

1. **Jonaid Jilani**

Jonaid Jilani

jonaid.jilani@islamic-relief.org.uk

07872 403 534

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Newsroom: <https://mediapigeon.io/newsroom/islamic-relief>

Website: <https://www.islamic-relief.org/>

Primary Email: info@islamic-relief.org.uk

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