

8 June 2020

Dear colleagues, friends and respected stakeholders,

We, at the Setshaba Research Centre, are devastated and enraged by the brutal and senseless murder of George Floyd, a black American man irrationally killed by a white police officer. Coming from a history of racial injustice, we can personally relate to the pain and the anger felt by other race groups in the USA and around the world. We reminisce about the stance that we held against Apartheid and loudly and proudly raise our hands and our voices against this act of violence and abuse.

Although we are living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with all our scientific and technological advances, it is sad to see that simple concepts like human equality are still not understood by many. A beating heart lives within each of us no matter how we differ on the outside, which is sacred and valuable. Red blood flows through our veins, irrespective of the colour of our skin. Every life deserves respect.

As a proudly black led organisation that is committed to improving the lives of others, we condemn all forms of abuse and injustice. As a world, we have a lot of work to do in equalizing the injustices that are present within so many forms around us. Social injustices, gender abuse, child abuse and racial abuse are just some of the examples which need our critical attention.

But within this storm, there is a silver lining, for it has brought to the forefront many important issues, conversations and most importantly actions in fighting these injustices. It has shown that for every one person who wants to abuse another, there are thousands who will stand up against it. There is a strong need for change, but with determination and unity it can be done. We need to fuel a mindset change which focuses on love and respect for all forms of life.

In the famous words of Nelson Mandela, our iconic leader through our Apartheid struggle: **“No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”**

We will not allow injustice and abuse to triumph.

**Black Lives Matter.**

**Together we can.**

