



VOTING WITH THEIR FEET: Hundreds of people, upset about the pace of housing delivery and the evictions of poor people, march from Keizergracht to Wale Street. *Picture: HENK KRUGER*

Outsourcing of delivery no solution, say housing protesters

MICHELLE JONES

CAPE FLATS residents have taken to the streets of central Cape Town in protest over slow service delivery, the privatisation of housing and evictions.

The joint committee representing residents of the N2 Gateway flats, the Joe Slovo informal settlement and the Symphony Way settlement in Delft organised yesterday's march with the Anti Eviction Campaign.

Their aim was to speed up housing delivery and draw attention to the problems caused by the privatisation of housing construction by Thubelisha Homes and hous-

ing management by Trafalgar Properties.

About 200 gathered in Keizergracht, where they were instructed to write their grievances on slips of paper that they placed inside three homemade coffins representing Thubelisha Homes, housing management company Trafalgar, and Housing MEC Richard Dyantyi.

They then marched and danced their way through the central city singing traditional protest songs, to the offices of the provincial Department of Local Government and Housing.

"They must give us houses immediately," said John Titus, who lives in the Symphony

Way settlement with his wife and five children. He had been on the waiting list for six years and "enough is enough".

Campaign organisers read the memorandum to Dyantyi outside his offices and allowed him to sign it.

In the memorandum, they urged Dyantyi to declare the housing backlog a state of emergency.

They recommended that he start by "scrapping the laws that allow for the eviction of poor people".

"Your department must take direct responsibility for housing, housing delivery, and housing management.

"But you continue to out-

source and privatise housing and housing delivery, as if this was a solution, rather than acknowledging that this is part of the problem.

"Evict Trafalgar and Thubelisha Homes, not the poor people."

Dyantyi's spokesperson, Vusi Tshose, said the department acknowledged that 410 000 people needed formal homes.

"It is our business to build houses. Housing is our priority. But there are certain things we can't resolve overnight."

Tshose said the department's budget enabled the building of only 16 000 houses a year.

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