



EMBRACE DIGNITY

+27 66 040 4660

info@embracedignity.org.za

Embrace Dignity, Postnet Suite 375, Private Bag X7, Sea Point, 8060

www.embracedignity.org.za



www.facebook.com/EmbraceDignity



www.twitter.com/Embrace_Dignity

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Observatory Civic Association

Letter of Support

Embrace Dignity supports the concerns of the Observatory Civic Association on the planned development of the Liesbeek River site. We support the call for the area to be graded a Provincial Heritage site and a National Khoisan Liberation Trail. We support the call for the truth to be revealed of the oppression, dehumanisation and exploitation and enslavement of the indigenous people. We call on the City of Cape Town to listen to the voices of the people who are calling for the preservation of their heritage site and the dignity of the ancestors of the indigenous people. Heritage sites are important in acknowledging the truth of the past and moving towards reconciliation in South Africa.

Embrace Dignity is a women's rights organisation which respects the dignity of all people and challenges the gendered power inequalities that continue to oppress women through the system of prostitution, sexual exploitation, trafficking and sexual abuse. We advocate for the abolition of the patriarchal system of prostitution. We are aware of the oppression, marginalisation, genocide, planned extermination, and enslavement of the indigenous people and the sexual exploitation of women and their prostitution by men in a position of power. We are saddened by the lack of acknowledgement that the bodies of enslaved women became the sites on which both sexual and physical violence was enacted. The much-publicized dehumanization of Sara Baartman is but one example of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation for profit of African women by colonialists.

We are aware of the importance of jobs and investment in the country and support the planned development in a different site that does not threaten our national heritage or dishonour the history of the indigenous people.

Aluta continua!

Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge

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