

# Press Release



*South Africa's Leading Research and Policy Organisation*

**For immediate release**

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**The South African Institute of Race Relations has warned that the behaviour of senior managers in the South African Police Force, around the recent Winnie Mandela incident, damages police morale, the rule of law, and the fight against crime.**

Late in 2010, according to media reports, members of the flying squad in Johannesburg stopped a vehicle carrying Winnie Mandela for allegedly speeding on the M1 in Johannesburg. According to the same reports, the flying squad officers were verbally abused by Mrs Mandela and her bodyguards. The reports also suggest that senior managers within the police have since acted against the officers in question by reassigning them to new duties and confiscating their weapons.

The Institute's deputy CEO, Frans Cronje, said: "Police members on the ground must be able to trust in the backing of the chain of command if they are to do their jobs effectively. In this case it appears as if the command chain has placed political considerations above its responsibility to its members. This is likely to undermine the morale not only of flying squad members around the country but also of all police officers. We therefore echo calls for an independent inquiry into events surrounding the Winnie Mandela incident. This matter goes far beyond the rights of a few officers. It goes to the heart of police effectiveness and the maintenance of the rule of law."