



Families of victims of crime had a wreath-laying ceremony to commemorate their loved ones at Harlequins in Groenkloof.

PICTURE: SZWE NDIKANE

Citizens across the country in protests against crime

**BARRY BATEMAN
and RYAN GOVENDER**

THOUSANDS of demonstrators gathered in towns and cities across the country calling for tougher action against crime before handing in memorandums at police stations.

Calls were made to the government, the police, businesses and the community to get involved in tackling crime.

In Pretoria, about 500 people gathered at the Harlequins Rugby

Club before taking their memorandums to 27 police stations.

In the Western Cape, 75 memorandums were handed over in towns such as Bellville, Beaufort West, Hermanus, Franschhoek and Montagu.

In Joburg 42 memorandums were handed over; 26 in KZN, 22 in the Free State and 55 in Mpumalanga and Limpopo. Gatherings were also held in Secunda, Port Elizabeth, Potchefstroom, Margate and Rustenburg.

Solidarity deputy general secretary Dirk Hermann said South Africans must not allow crime to become a normal part of society.

"Through the protest action, we want to mobilise communities to get involved in community safety actions in co-operation with the police," he said.

The protesters wrote notes on pieces of paper and clipped them to carnations, which were eventually thrown on to the grass in the shape of a cross.

One letter read: "A day does not go by when we don't think of mom. You were taken away from us by someone who did not care. We miss and love mom a lot. It was unnecessary."

Another said: "I was threatened with a knife for a cellphone, but luckily I was not hurt. We are sick of crime."

Elize Brand said she felt strongly for the cause. "We've been robbed twice at work. They stole computers both times and we couldn't

work after that," she said.

Reckson Mdluli said that it was time the government did something drastic about crime. He said he took part in the protest so that his voice could be heard.

A man, who did not want to be identified, said he was tired of crime.

"I was driving on the N4 when a rock, the size of a tennis ball, was thrown through my windscreen. The guy wanted to rob me. These things must stop," he said.