

Citizens across country protest against crime

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THOUSANDS of demonstrators gathered in towns and cities across the country yesterday 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 and Hermanus.

In Joburg, 42 memorandums were handed over, 26 in KwaZulu-Natal, 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 that South Africans must not allow crime to become a

normal part of society. "To show that crime is abnormal, we must protest against it... 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 cell-phone, but luckily I was not hurt. We are sick of crime."

Elize Brand said: "We've been robbed twice at work. They stole computers... and we couldn't work after that."

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

"I was driving on the N4 when a rock the size of a tennis ball was thrown through my windscreen... these things must stop," he said.