

Thousands demand legalisation of cannabis in S.Africa

May 7 2016

Thousands of South Africans took to the streets of Cape Town on Saturday demanding a relaxation of drugs laws to allow medicinal and recreational use of cannabis.

Around 3,000 protesters took part in the march, some smoking [cannabis](#), also known as marijuana and others carrying placards or [cannabis plants](#) growing in portable containers.

"We were marching for the legalisation and regulation of cannabis in South Africa," lead organiser Johannes Berkhout told AFP.

"There is more than enough evidence around the world about the medicinal benefits of cannabis," he said, adding that legalisation would create a "safer and much more controllable" use of the drug.

Use of cannabis and medicinal marijuana is gaining popularity in some parts of the world to ease suffering from cancer, glaucoma, HIV and AIDS, and other serious conditions.

But opponents fear crime connected to drug abuse and users graduating to harder drugs

A South African opposition lawmaker Mario Oriani-Ambrosini in 2014 submitted draft legislation calling for the legalisation of marijuana but died soon after.

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