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On a three-week fact-finding mission to South Africa, Rajmohan Gandhi said the greatest tragedy of South Africa was that its people did not know each other. "This is one of the country's biggest obstacles to peace," he said.

"It's all very well for the high-level politicians to be able to get on and agree with one another, but what really matters is that people at grassroots level are able to communicate," observed Mr Gandhi.

It was a worldwide trend, he added, for people to "find their own with their own lot", but it was a misperception that loving your own people could only be achieved by hating others.

"Demolishing your neighbour's house is not the way to build your own."

If South African leaders can come together in agreement, "it will be an amazing thing for mankind", he said.