



THE PRESIDENCY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

From the desk of

Deputy Minister Pinky Kekana

NATIONAL LAUNCH: 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GBVF

The Lungile Mtshotwana Foundation Golf Day

27 NOVEMBER 2022

Good evening esteemed guests,

This evening, I greet you in the names of Nosicelo Mtembeni, Uyinene Mrwetyana, Zolile Khumalo, Takalani Mbulungeni, Shonees van Wyk, Keri Bloem, Zikhona Gcwabe, Suritha Alting – know their names, remember their names.

These are just a few of the thousands of women in South whose lives were cut short by GBVF.

A number I want you to remember and know is 2742 – this is the number of women who were murdered by men in 2022 alone, most of them by their partners or someone they knew and trusted.

The worst part is that this ridiculously high number does not even include the number of women raped and abused on a daily basis in South Africa.

Lest we forget the brutal and sickening gang rape of 8 women of a film crew, by 60 armed men, at a mine dump in Krugersdorp on 28 July 2022.

Lest we forget that 9516 rapes were reported to police during April and June 2022, just in 3 months, not taking into account the thousands of unreported cases.

THIS is who we have become as a nation.

A nation of rapists and murderers!

Are you happy to be known as being this nation?

I certainly am not. But this is the culture brewing in our workplaces, in our homes, and before you assume its only in poverty-stricken areas, the University of Johannesburg studies will show you that the no.1 spot for GBV is Sandton.

Before we blame the police, who rightly or wrongly can be blamed, it is critical to remember that if we didn't have this culture in the first place, we would not need to be policed for it.

Weaponising women's bodies through abuse, sexual violence and femicide is a common characteristic of war, whether in the traditional sense or the changing context of warfare.

At the Munich Security Conference, a few days before Russia invaded Ukraine, Kenya's Minister of Foreign Affairs H.E Raychelle Omamo said, "War has changed. War is moving into cities. You're just as likely to be gang-raped in an informal settlement in an African city as you are out on the warfront."

This statement references South Africa more than most countries in the world, because according to our latest statistics on GBVF and crime in general, South Africa is then statistically a war zone.

I want to put this into perspective for you though, from an economic development and recovery standpoint.

According to the global 2022 Women Danger Index* of the most dangerous countries for women to travel to, did you know that our beloved South Africa, holds the very TOP SPOT! Yes ladies and

gentlemen, we are no. 1 on a global list for many things – it's not the lists we want to be no 1 for though.

The hardest part for me to read of the Women Danger Index, was:

“Only 25% of South African women said they felt safe walking alone at night, the lowest of any country in the world. South Africa is notorious for sexual violence. It is estimated that over 40% of South African women will be raped in their lifetime. Additionally, South Africa ranked the worst for the intentional homicide of women. South Africa was the only country to receive a report card of “F” on the index.”

It should be the hardest part for any South African, for any of you to read, because the “F” is not just a report card indicator – it's what it means to us as a country.

It means that 50% of a global target market of tourists, being women, are being warned NOT to travel to South Africa, this DIRECTLY impacts our tourism. Tourism is a gateway to trade and industry development as we know, which means that it DIRECTLY impacts our trade deals, the value of our ZAR. It DIRECTLY impacts jobs and our fiscal standing in the world, and this obviously DIRECTLY impacts our economy.

I wish I could say to you this is the only, but sadly this is just one example. All our trade relations with global markets matter not, if this is our reputation.

So, our lack of eradication of GBVF is more than just a blood stain on South Africa's national standing, it is impacting our economy and our nation's prosperity in the harshest way. While loadshedding is still the biggest question investors have for us as government, our stability as a nation which crime is a huge factor, is a close second, preventing investment in a country that was once spoken about as the 'darling of Africa', the 'rainbow nation'.

The private sector in the room tonight will affirm that multinational investors want to invest in a shining example of democracy, peace, and prosperity - not a war zone.

In these economics of warfare, the twist of fate should not be lost on any of us. The levels of abuse by men, are impacting the very jobs being lost by men, because not only women are losing their jobs, because that's how an economy works.

As government, we have to work with the private sector and civil society in a more concentrated and intentional way to deal with this scourge that is preventing us from reaching our full potential as a nation.

GBVF has been called the shadow pandemic of Covid, yet while Covid has vaccines that have allowed us to move past the pandemic, we have not been able to 'vaccinate' the world from GBVF, with South Africa being the epicentre.

Let the 2022 '16 days of activism' be the year that you step forward to make a concerted and impactful contribution to eradicating the scourge of GBVF from our reputation. The nation brand of South Africa can only do so much to show investors who we are and why they should consider investing in the most industrialised nation on the African continent. But, then investors question our ability to remain a stable and secure nation, quite rightly so.

As a representative of the Presidency of our great nation, I commit to you tonight in doing everything I can, that is within my power to create awareness about projects, initiatives and campaigns that are dealing with eradicating GBVF. I commit to supporting any initiative that purports

authentic and uncorrupt work in this sphere, and I will lend my name and title to them, because it has to start with each one of us.

I want to thank the Lungile Mtshotwana Foundation and all their funders for committing themselves to this cause, and I ask you tonight each one, to reach another one, and to join our army of warriors, in fighting this war.

I am putting my hand up first as the public sector, and I ask you to join hands with me, as the private sector and civil society, so that together WE may declare war on our enemies – those who have created a war on the bodies of our women and children.

I thank you in advance.

