



**Republic of South Africa  
Ministry Justice and Correctional Services**

**Address by Minister of Justice and Correctional Services at the relaunch of the  
Gender Based Violence call centre 27 November 2020**

**Check against delivery**

**Minister of Social Development, Ms. Lindiwe Zulu, MP**

**Deputy Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Ms. Noxolo Kiviet, MP**

**MEC of Social Development: Gauteng Dr. Nomathemba Mokgethi, MPL**

**United Nations Resident Co-ordinator: Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas**

*She told me that,*

*She is tired of living in fear of being raped or killed*

*Or both, and has lost hope in believing that*

*Maybe one day, these atrocities will come to an end.*

*She's tired of burying women*

*With hopes that their souls will rest in peace*

*The peace that was robbed from them while they lived*

***The peace that was robbed by men.***

***She told me that,***

***My gender, inclusive of those***

***Who share a similar melanated skin***

***Continue to deny her & her sisters, basic human rights***

***While I just continue to write poems***

***In the comfort zones of male privilege***

***Ignorant of the fact that men have always been***

***The reason why even the moon has sleepless nights...***

This is a slight adaptation from unsigned poem published in a publication called the Journalist. As we mourn the passing of Gender Based Violence and Femicide victims, this poem really compels us particularly as men, to reflect about ***“the comfort zones of male privilege”*** as its title suggests.

In the world of modern technology, real time data is a catalysts for an efficient system. We’ve no doubt in our minds that this centre will help us collate data that will enable the whole of government to be responsive to the challenges of GBVF.

Ladies and Gentleman,

When President Cyril Ramaphosa characterised gender based violence and femicide as the second pandemic, this marked a significant departure in the manner in which we ought to approach the scourge of gender based violence and femicide as a nation. This centre is a welcome addition to government assenal aimed to fight GBVF.

We do not sit by and watch a pandemic devour the nation. As part of a collaborative effort by government, We are working towards creating a legal environment that allows us to collect, process and capture data for contact tracing, and reporting to the public on actions regularly. This is essentially what we have learnt from COVID-19. In order for us to make swift and targeted interventions, our data has to be accurate.

In many ways the **National Strategic Plan On Gender-Based Violence & Femicide 2020 – 2030**, creates a leeway for us to ensure that a victim-centred approach becomes systematic in the justice system.

Through the implementation of NSP on GBVF, we will focus on the needs and concerns of victims to ensure the compassionate and sensitive delivery of services in a non-judgmental manner. We must minimise traumatisation associated with the criminal justice processes by providing support of victim advocates and service providers. This must empower survivors as engaged participants in the process, and provide them an opportunity to play a role in seeing those who violate them brought to justice.

Government reprioritised R1.6 billion for the Emergency Action Plan, which focuses on improving access to justice for survivors of violence and prevention campaigns to change attitudes and behaviour in society.

We have made important progress in reforming our laws to give greater protection to survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

We have introduced three amendment Bills aimed at closing some of the identified gaps in our systems. The bills give full effect to the rights of the country's women and children.

In terms of the plan we need to ensure that

- All GBV survivors are able to access efficient and sensitive criminal justice that is quick, accessible, responsive and gender inclusive;
- We strengthen capacity within the criminal justice system to address all impunity, effectively respond to femicide and facilitate justice for GBVF survivors;
- Amend legislation related to GBVF areas that build on legislative reforms initiated under the Emergency Response Action Plan.

I am pleased to say that we are well on our way to implementing these aspects of the plan. For instance, the amendments to legislation are currently being considered by parliament.

To this end, programme director, I must indicate that we are indebted to civil society for their inputs on the bills. Some of the suggestions are already in the system, for instance, some of the submissions advise that we mandate training for Magistrates. This training must be gender transformative and victim-centred.

This is something is currently in the curriculum of the South African Judicial Education Institute. We will ensure that there is more collaboration with civil society organizations to strengthen this initiative.

We continually appeal to all South Africans to join the national offensive against gender based violence and femicide. It is all in our hands, as civil society, communities, and individuals, we can all tackle this second pandemic. It all starts by confronting the comforts of male privilege.

May this call centre continue to be a critical component of our ability to effectively respond to this pandemic.

I thank you.