

VIRTUAL ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO HON. CHUPU MATHABATHA
DURING THE LUNCH OF THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM ON NO VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN HELD VIRTUALLY.

25 November 2020

Programme Director, MEC Nkakareng Rakgoale;
MEC for Transport and Community Safety, Mme Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya;
Commissioner Mbuyiselo Botha from the Commission for Gender Equality;
Representatives of all formations established to fight Gender Based Violence in our province;
Faith Based Organizations present here today;
Our Esteemed Traditional Leaders;
Distinguished Guests;
Friends from the Media;
The People of Limpopo Province.
Good Afternoon to all of you.
Chairperson of the Session

Let me start by expressing my appreciations to everyone who has logged-in to this virtual address on the 16 Days of Activism of no Violence against Women and Children.

The fight against the abuse of women and children is a fight of our time and it is a fight we cannot afford to lose. Our fight against the abuse of women and children coincides with yet another important fight, which is the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

Those who have done research have already confirmed that women are the hardest hit by the devastating consequences of Covid-19 pandemic. A number of women-dominated industries such as the beauty and cosmetic industry, the tourism sector, textile and manufacturing, the informal trade and many others have been the most affected.

As a result, a huge number of women have lost their income. As we all know, without a source of income, women become even more vulnerable to abusive tendencies in their own households. Corona virus has therefore imposed double-trouble for women in this country and beyond.

Therefore, I would like to thank each and every one of you for responding so positively to this very important campaign about the safety and security of women and children of our country. Like we said before, this is a fight that we cannot afford to lose.

Dear people of Limpopo Province

Today is yet another important platform for all of us to speak in one voice and say 'no to any form of abuse against women and children'. Today is about re-emphasising the message that women's rights are human rights.

Today is about a recommitment to taking care and protecting the children of this country. I dare say that the future of this country cannot be guaranteed without protecting and advancing the rights of women and children.

Today each one of us should raise his or her voice and say count me in the struggle against:

- Physical violence against women;
- Economic abuse of women;
- Psychological abuse of women;
- The bullying behavior of children at school, and
- All forms of abuses against women and children.

Programme Director

While we seem to be registering inspiring progress against Covid-19 pandemic, the pandemic of women and child abuse seems to be more stubborn. Each day in the news, we hear reports, see on TV and read in the newspapers about horrific incidences of women and children abuse.

These abuses have reached monumental proportions. The abuses of women and children in this country have indeed reached pandemic levels. To defeat this pandemic, we will require the same energy, awareness campaigns, solidarity and investment of resources as we did with the fight against Covid-19 pandemic. We need everyone on board.

Fellow Residents

We have accepted that there is a strong relationship between child abuse and women abuse. In most cases, the abuse of women has direct effect on their children.

It is for this reason that our campaign against women abuse is also a campaign against child abuse. The truth is that those who abuse women and children are cowards.

They take advantage of the fact that in most instances, women and children do not have the necessary muscular power to physically defend themselves against their abusers.

The fact is that abuse directed at women is also felt by their children. It is also indisputable that the abuse directed at children is also felt by women as mothers. As government, our intention is to rid society of any abuse against women and children.

It is only a man with low self-esteem who will derive pleasure in abusing those who are vulnerable. The truth is that real men will never raise a hand against a woman or a child.

Those who do so are not worthy to be called men.
Real men don't abuse. Real men care and protect.

Programme Director;

The message against the abuse of women and children is a year-round message. No one should be made to think that we are only vigilant during this period of 16 days of activism on no violence against women and children.

Every single day is a day against the abuse of women and children. For this to be successful, every single one of us must be a campaigner against women and child abuse.

All of us must join hands to rescue women from the web of untold sufferings of rape, sexual harassment, emotional, financial and physical abuse.

The most painful thing is that women are subjected to these painful and shameful realities in the hands of the same people, who have publicly vowed to love, respect and protect them.

Chairperson of the Session

At times children are made to suffer abuse in the hands of who gave birth to them or those who legally undertook to care for them. If we know of a mother who is not taking her child to school we must speak out as a community.

If we know of a mother who is not bathing her kids we must speak out as a community. If we know of a mother who abuses the money for child support on alcohol or gambling, we must speak out as a community.

We must do so because no child deserves to be with an uncaring mother. We must all raise our hands and be counted in the struggle against women and children abuse.

I want to urge every man in this country to be an activist against the abuse of women and children. This is the moment for real men to stand up and be counted.

This is the time to say NOT IN MY NAME.

Indeed real men don't abuse.

Real men protect, love and care.

I am optimistic that working together we will win this war against gender based violence. It is in our hands and we shall over-come.

Chairperson of the Session

Please allow me to refer to the statement my office issued in last month, October 2020, raising serious concerns regarding the on-going killings of people by others in the province. If one looks deeper into that statement, it is evident that 99% of those killings falls under the category of gender based violence. We say this because out of every 10 death cases reported, 9,9% of those are perpetrated by men against women and children.

That is why we are saying that enough is enough. Real Men do not abuse or kill women and children. Instead real men do love and care for women and children,

Programme Director

I want to end by saying that, we know that gender-based violence is a significant problem globally and in South Africa. Currently, as political leadership we are mindful of the public outcry for call towards increased penalties and convictions for perpetrators of various types of gender-based violence.

And this topic is rising sharply in the public discourse and it cannot be ignored. We call upon our police to act decisively and swiftly in dealing with cases of gender based violence. In the same spirit, we also urge our police to be sensitive in dealing with these sensitive cases.

From our courts we are requesting nothing less than the harshest sentences permitted by the laws of this country. Enough is Enough. We shall overcome.

I thank you!
Kea Leboga!
Na Khensa!
Ndaa!