

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR TRANSPORT AND  
COMMUNITY SAFETY HON. MAKOMA MAKHURUPETJE  
ON BEHALF OF LIMPOPO PREMIER STANLEY  
MATHABATHA, DURING THE PROVINCIAL LAUNCH OF  
THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM ON NO VIOLENCE AGAINST  
WOMEN AND CHILDREN, NAPHUNO, GREATER TZANEEN  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, MOPANI DISTRICT**

**24 November 2018**

Programme Director;

Executive Mayor of Mopani District Municipality Cllr Nkakareng  
Rakgoale;

Mayor of Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality Cllr Maripe  
Mangena

Speakers, Chief Whips, MMC's and all Councillors present here  
today;

Chairperson of Mopani Local House of Traditional leaders,

The SAPS Provincial Commissioner,

Cluster Commanders of SAPS;

Leaders of Chapter Nine Institutions

Progressive Women Movement of South Africa

Chairperson of Community Policing Forum Board

Chairperson of the Provincial Community Safety Board

Women and Children Rights Organisations; Men's Forums;

Pastors from various denominations;

Ladies and Gentlemen; Comrades and Friends;  
Good Morning, Ndi matsheloni, Avuxeni, Thobela

Our meeting here takes place during a month in which we remember the lives of people who died in road traffic accidents all over the world, but more especially here in our province. We remember the many millions killed and injured on our roads, together with their families, friends and many others who are also affected. This is also a month in which we thank and pray for the lives of traffic officers and emergency services officers and reflect on the tremendous burden they carry to save lives.

Last week Sunday, our province held a successful event at which we prayed for the reduction of road injuries and fatalities. It is our hope that fatalities will reduce during the festive season and we ask you to use any available opportunity in your churches to continue praying that the lives of our people can be spared on the roads.

Programme director

The occasion of holding this 16 days campaign happens during a year in which we celebrate triple centenaries. We celebrate the birth of struggle icon Mama Albertina Sisulu, a woman of fortitude and Tata Nelson Mandela, our Isithwalandwe in the

struggle for national liberation. The third centenary we celebrate this year is the 100 year anniversary since the formation of the Bantu Women's League, which was the first women's organisation to take root in South Africa back in 1918.

Its leader, Dr Charlotte Manye Maxeke was to later lead the African National Congress Women's League as its first President. She and other women leaders like Lilian Ngoyi and Helen Joseph were amongst the first to plant the foundation stone which formed the basis of the 1956 women's march to the Union buildings.

It is against this background programme director, that we want to convey gratitude to the leaders of young women in Limpopo and from all over our country for the role they have played in organising countrywide marches on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August to highlight the plight of gender based violence.

The actions of these young women is in keeping with the proud traditions and legacies of those women of courage who came before us, such as Winnie Mandela, Sophie Du Bryn, Ruth First, Bertha Gxowa, Ida Mtwana, Josephine Moshobane and many others. In our young women, we see ourselves represented and are certain that the struggle for gender

emancipation will become even more successful under their stewardship.

In the name of our forbearers - let us continue to fight gender based violence. Let us continue to fight the rape culture in our colleges and universities and also in our communities. Let us refuse to become victims of abuse. No university lecturer has a right to take advantage of a young woman in exchange of marks. No employer has a right to sexually harass any young woman in exchange for a job or even a promotion. Enough is enough! Our bodies cannot be a crime scene!

Before I proceed with my address, Programme director, let me indicate that the Executive Council of Limpopo and the Premier have expressed their disgust at the continuing incidents of violence against women and children and want to see action being taken against perpetrators in line with the resolutions taken at our recent Presidential Gender Based Violence Summit.

I have been asked by Premier Chupu Stanley Mathabatha who is not able to be with us today, to convey his unwavering solidarity with all women of our province who continue to fight the scourge of abuse at home, in their places of work and even at learning centres. The Premier wants us to continue the fight

against gender based violence especially on this period of 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children.

Programme director

May I remind you that violence against women and children takes various shapes and forms in society. It includes physical violence, sexual violence, emotional and psychological violence. This violence often manifests itself either in the family or in the workplace and even at educational institutions. It may include battering, rape, marital rape, sexual abuse, sexual abuse of disabled female children or the elderly, forced prostitution, trafficking of women, or sexual harassment in the workplace, and at institutions of learning.

Each one of us gathered here knows someone who has been violated by a partner, spouse or even a close relative. We know of women who have been beaten up by their husbands or boyfriends simply for going out without informing them. There are cases of women being assaulted by their husbands for refusing to have sex or for burning food. In some cases, women are beaten up by their partners for neglecting children. As government, we are here to say; NO against all forms of abuse against of women.

Programme director

This year was one of the most brutal years in the fight against gender based violence. It is one of the years where we experienced the most shocking tales of women and children being abused. I'm sure we all agree that rape and rape culture are on the rise in our communities and especially in our institutions of higher learning.

This year alone, we have heard numerous reports of young women at universities who got killed at the hands of their so-called lovers after suffering either rape or gender based violence. It is against this background that we cannot forget the suicide note left by Khensani Maseko after a rape ordeal at Rhodes University early this year.

The case of Khensani Maseko is perhaps a typical example of what goes on in the mind of a rape victim after suffering violence and humiliation at the hands of her abuser. It must be indicated that women abuse and femicide which are today out of control contribute largely to mental health cases.

Religious places have not been spared of gender based violence as women are touched inappropriately in churches and raped in the name of prayers. We are just recovering from the recent televised rape trial involving a Nigerian Pastor who is

alleged to have raped from the age of 14, 22 year old Cheryl Zondi. The treatment which the victim received at the hands of the defense lawyer smacks of secondary victimization. It is one of the reasons why many rapes are left unreported in our country.

Apart from this case, we also have many incidences where young women are victimised in demand of sex-for-jobs. Students and women academics are also raped in institutions of higher learning and are forced to face their abusers everyday on campuses – that is, if they are strong enough not to quit. All these extreme cases require us to strengthen both rural and urban activism in order to improve the socio-economic status of women and girls.

Our mission as government is to propagate a message that condemns violence and the abuse of our women and children. We want this violence to eventually come to an end sooner rather than later. Government runs the 16 Days of Activism Campaign to create public awareness on the negative impact of violence on women and children and to encourage collective action against all types of abuse.

Our 16 days campaign is part of the broader South African 365 days national action plan to end gender violence which was

launched on 8 March 2007. The vision of the 365 days campaign is to see a South Africa free from gender based violence where women, men, girls and boys can realize their full potential.

The goal of the campaign is to ensure that we mount a sustained prevention and awareness campaign that extends the 16 days of activism period into a year-long campaign that involves women and men across the country.

The intention of this campaign is to raise awareness, to expand accountability, to mobilize active and patriotic citizenry, to foster a paradigm shift and to communicate a coherent message that encourages communities to work together towards a violence free country.

It is also the aim of the campaign to ensure that the South African Police Service takes seriously the reported cases of domestic violence and that there is significant reduction in femicides and cases of domestic violence each year. The goal of the campaign is also to reduce contact crimes such as murder, assault, and GBH by over 10% per annum.

It is our aim to see active participation by communities in preventing the occurrences of these cases because the police alone cannot occupy every square metre of this province. As government we are committed to strengthen partnerships and

collaboration with Men's Forums such as *Munna Ndi Nnyi?*, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), faith-based organizations, traditional leadership and healers as well as the business sector.

We want more partners to come on board so that we can implement a more effective and rigorous 365 Days National Action Plan. Victims of abuse are further advised to utilize services that are available and designed to protect them.

The SAPS has a unit called the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences unit whose focus is to deal with crimes that are prevalent amongst vulnerable groups. There are 16 of these units throughout our province. Let us utilize them. There are 81 stations in the province with victim friendly rooms to help victims of gender violence. Our message is that let us use these centres.

One of the key resolutions taken at the recent Presidential Summit on Gender Based Violence is that there should be adequate resourcing of Thuthuzela Care Centres. Government also want to see more sexual offences courts established and shelters that respond to the needs of all people including people with disabilities and LGBTQI.

During the same Summit, it was also agreed that government should immediately set up a legislated Presidential multi-stakeholder Structure on gender based violence with at least 51% representatives of civil society.

Programme director

While we fight gender based violence and the general oppression of women in our society, we must still recognise progress that has been made since 1994 in terms of advancing the interests of women. In 1994, there were only 28% of women in Parliament now we have 43%. The Provincial Legislature had only 25% now we have 42% women representatives. Local government in 2000 had 28% women representation countrywide, now we have 52% female Mayors and Speakers out of 27 municipalities in Limpopo.

In the past more girls than boys used to drop out of school, but now more girls than boys get matric. There are now more girls and women in universities and colleges than what we used to have in 1994. All these signify good progress that we must build on.

Our vision as the ANC government is to build a society where women live their full lives as equals, with no fear of violence and have all the opportunities in the world to reach their full

potential. We want this to be achieved through amongst others improving the representation of women in the leadership of companies and in government through employment equity legislation and sector charters.

We also want more and more women becoming beneficiaries of government programmes and taking up business opportunities in the private sector. All these efforts will help to level gender imbalances and help ensure that women are not treated as second class citizens.

Our society cannot afford to raise children who are psychologically tormented because of domestic violence. Our society cannot afford to raise children without mothers and fathers, without brothers and sisters, and without grandparents simply because of domestic violence. Men must become positive role models.

As with all other years, one of the focal points of our campaign this year is to encourage a greater participation of men in the effort to prevent violence against women and children. The voices of men are crucial in discouraging violence and abuse as men often tend to become perpetrators.

On this occasion of the commemoration of 16 days of activism, we make a call to our younger men and boys to be inspired to

take action and commit themselves to become activists against gender based violence. Research has proven that boys who have grown up in abusive families tend to become even more abusive themselves in future relationships. These boys and men must become our target.

We call on responsible father figures to instill the values of human dignity, equality and respect in young men and boys. We must mentor and teach young boys about how they can become men enough in ways that do not involve degrading or abusing girls and women.

Abusers, blessers, murderers and rapists have no place in our community, and they must be held accountable for their actions. Now is the time to make our voices heard and declare publicly that enough is enough.

All cases of abuse, especially in rural areas need to be reported to authorities for immediate action. We must work with the police, prosecutors and magistrates to make sure that these criminals are arrested and convicted of their crimes. There is no need to protect the abuser simply because he or she is a breadwinner.

As the festive season approaches let us take stronger precautionary measures to heighten our guard so that we do not find ourselves vulnerable to incidences of abuse.

It's our responsibility to ensure that we look after ourselves and work together with our CPF and CSF to assist the SAPS to enforce the Law.

If we know of a man or a woman who is beating up their spouse let us speak out. If we know of a mother who is not taking care of her child, let us approach authorities.

If we know of a mother or a father who is abusing their disabled child let us break the silence. If we know of a mother or a father who is not taking their child to school, we must speak out as the community. If we know of someone who is abusing social security grant of an elderly person through alcohol or gambling, we must break the silence.

Only by speaking out will perpetrators be brought to book and serve their full sentences. Hand to hand we can move a non-violent South Africa forward!

I wish you a happy and safer festive season without gender based violence! Working together we can build a province where all people are safe and feel safe.

**Let us all Arrive Alive! Inkomu!**