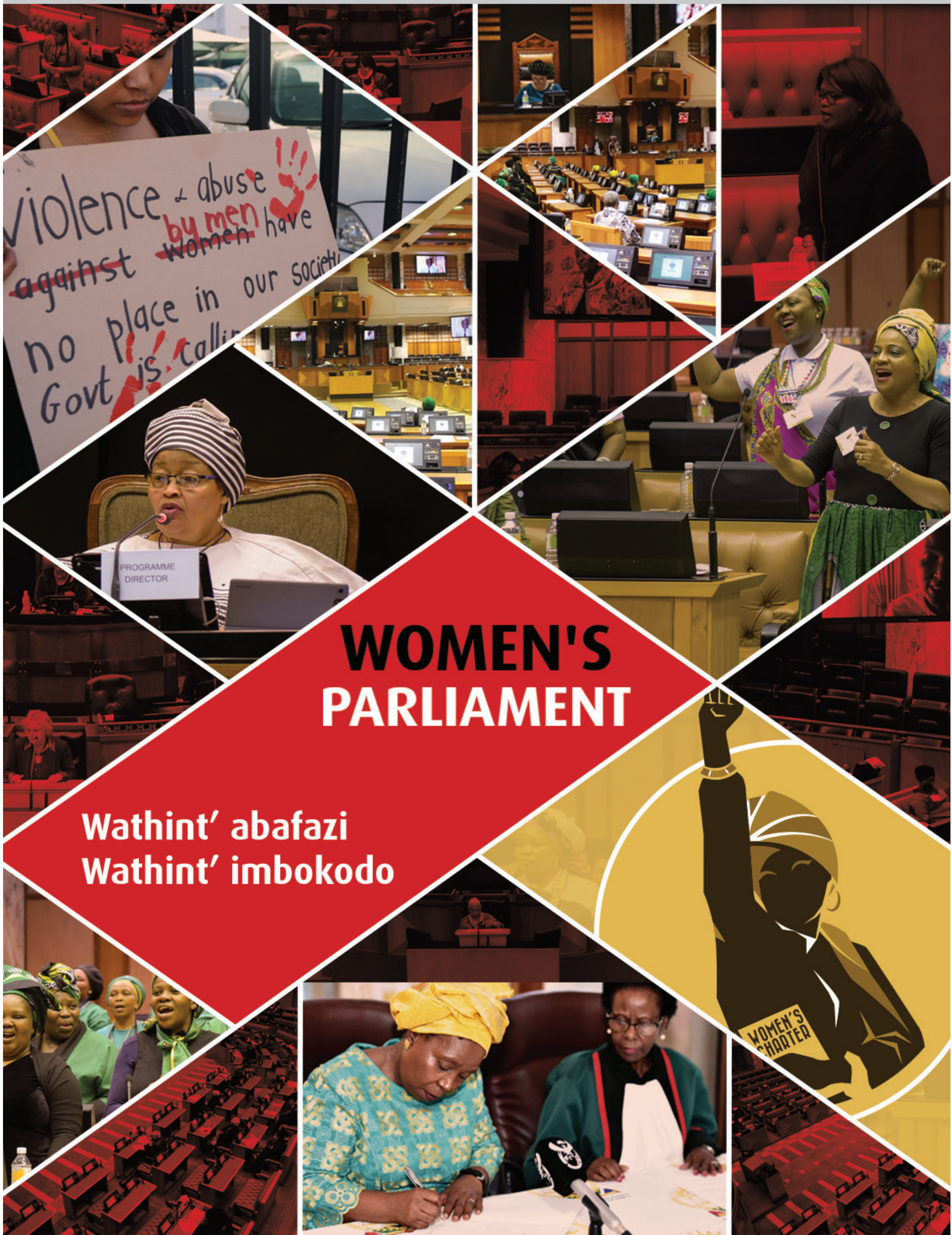


# in session



## WOMEN'S PARLIAMENT

Wathint' abafazi  
Wathint' imbokodo



# 2020 Women's Parliament a platform for finding solutions to GBV



PARLIAMENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**"GBV requires multiple approaches  
and the time for theories is over"**

- Ms Lucas

Parliament held a hybrid 2020 Women's Parliament with the theme: "Generation Equality: Advancing our collective efforts to end gender-based violence and femicide", **reports Abel Mputing.**

Delivering opening remarks, the Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Ms Sylvia Lucas, stated that Parliament serves as a strategic platform for leaders to share ideas, engage constructively and come up with solutions to gender-based-violence (GBV). "GBV requires multiple approaches and the time for theories is over," Ms Lucas said.

Ms Lucas told members of Women's Parliament, which included Members of the National Assembly (NA) and the NCOP, that the 2020 Women's Parliament is a continuation of the 2019 Provincial Review Sessions of the Women's Charter. This review assessed the women's rights regime to identify policy gaps, legislative oversight mechanisms, and barriers to gender equality. She described the parliament as a strategic session seeking to distil points of views that must either shape or influence state policy on gender-based violence.

The Minister of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, delivered the keynote address. She believes tangible progress has been made to bring about gender equality in political representation and decision-making processes. However, that progress

is undermined by GBV, which has stained our national consciousness.

In her view, this Women's Parliament must strive to identify concrete measures, emergency responses, plans and resources to combat GBV. To contribute to this endeavour since President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement of the National Strategy on GBV, her ministry has increased the number of care centres and the police have improved their capacity to deal with crimes and services related to women and children going through the justice system.

Ms Nkoana-Mashabane also referred to the President's move to include women in the economy through public procurement. If women's financial situation improves, they will be less dependent on abusive men due to their financial circumstances.

Representing the legislative sector on the topic "Advancing an effective legislative sector in the fight against gender-based violence and femicide", the Deputy Speaker of the NA, Mr Lechesa Tsenoli, stated that there is a need for a collective effort to combat GBV. He claimed that today's gathering was an evidence of that process.

Mr Tsenoli pointed out that the Legislative Sector Legacy Report provides an overview of the work that still needs to be done and a need for a coordinated approach from the legislatures when dealing with GBV. The sector's oversight model

is one tool to follow through on the executive undertakings, National Strategy on Gender-Based Violence responses, plans and policies.

Couple with this, Mr Tsenoli said the legislative sector has adopted a public education campaign to help deal with the spread of GBV as a critical priority and for ongoing work. He commended the organisers of the 2020 Women's Parliament for bringing the three arms of the state together to come up with policy recommendations that could have a lasting impact. Mr Tsenoli believes that this constitutes the most decisive way of dealing with GBV today and in future. 🇷🇸



Ms Sylvia Lucas



# Put the interests of women above the perpetrators



Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and Justice Sisi Khampepe

*The 2020 Women's Parliament brought together the three spheres of government under one roof – the legislature, executive and the judiciary, writes Abel Mputing.*

The judiciary was represented by the Acting Chief Justice, Justice Sisi Khampepe.

The judiciary has sometimes been criticised for its insensitivity in dealing with gender-based violence (GBV) cases, particularly by victims. Justice Khampepe's reflections on the role of the judiciary addressed some of those concerns head-on. In her view, it is necessary to deliberate on the legal principles, terminology and certain legal policies to bring about effective and appropriate responses to both the perpetrators and the victims of these crimes.

She reflected on three areas: the appropriateness of law; practices; and approaches often taken by judges in these cases, which require urgent attention from the judiciary and law-makers. "Law-makers must ensure that laws promote gender equality as enshrined in our Constitution. This is to ensure that legal principles applied

in courts are not based on entrenched patriarchal norms and principles."

She cited marital rape as a case in point and noted that recently the Constitutional Court has "viewed marital rape not as a sexual rape, but an act of asserting power imbalances, of domination that entrenches the patriarchal system prevalent in society".

This is a step in the right direction, she said. She further maintained that the judiciary should in its practices recognise women as a vulnerable group and should therefore put the interests of women above that of the perpetrators of these crimes, as this is currently not the case.

In approaching GBV cases, the judiciary must adopt norms that will protect and respect the victim. She suggested that such cases must be held in camera, and the victims and witnesses must be anonymised. In

addition, cross-examinations must not re-traumatise and re-victimise, but should rather give victims access to justice in a trauma-free manner. The training of the judiciary in these aspects of the law, practices and approaches must be accelerated if the victims of these crimes are to be accorded the justice they deserve.

In a recorded message played during the special parliament, President Cyril Ramaphosa condemned the prevalence of GBV in South African society, saying the country is "drenched in the tears" of the victims of gender-based violence. He promised that the state will do all it can to ensure that those found guilty face the full might of the law.

He was pleased to announce that much has been done since the inception of the emergency response plan. "We have now provided greater support and improved

the capacity of police to deal with these crimes."

In addition, some laws, such as Sexual and Domestic Offences Acts, have been reformed in a bid to protect the constitutional rights of women. There is now also a policy focus to improve the activity of women in the economy, the President continued. "Government has introduced new public procurement regulations that will allocate a certain percentage to women enterprises.

These are not only social, but economic policies meant to alleviate women from the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality, often associated with gender-based violence." 🌹



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# Gender Equality - 'Although we have achieved several objectives, there is still a lot to be done'

*We have also heard the President calling for 40% procurement favouring women-owned businesses. It does not mean it will remain at 40% forever*

As part of the 62nd anniversary of Women's Day, Insession spoke to veteran women's struggle activist, and former member of the National Assembly and Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Women's Caucus in the fifth Parliament, Ms Rosalia Masefele Storey Morutoa. **Mava Lukani spoke to her.**

In response to a question about whether the guiding principles of the mass democratic movement – non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy and unity – in the struggle against apartheid have been fully achieved, Ms Morutoa said: "We have come a long way as a country and we have achieved a lot. We have a constitution that provides for respect, equality, and dignity for all of us in our diversity as citizens."

Furthermore, she said, the constitution provides for the establishment of institutions to guard these gains, such as the South African Human Rights Commission, and the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE). "Although we have managed to achieve several objectives, there is still a lot to be done. We are still facing challenges like gender-based violence and femicide, discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, transgender, genderqueer, queer, intersexed, agender, asexual, and ally) community, we still have situations where women are paid less than men for the same work. We still have certain population groups

that want to build towns for only one population group. So, all in all we still have to put in a lot of work as the struggle continues. We haven't achieved what we wanted to achieve."

Ms Morutoa joined the second Parliament in 2000 as a Member of the National Assembly. As a Member of Parliament, she said she was driven by seeing the translation of what is contained in the Freedom Charter into a reality and to ensure that the democratic Parliament passed laws that would change the plight of the historically disadvantaged majority of South Africans and to ensure that there were equal opportunities for all.

On constituency work, she said her constituencies in the third, fourth and fifth parliaments were Everton, Vereeniging, Soweto, Roodepoort, Greater Johannesburg and Dobsonville. "I went to the constituencies at each and every constituency time. I ensured that I attended to each and every constituency issue that was brought before my attention," she said.

Ms Morutoa served on various parliamentary committees in all the terms of the democratic Parliament. She served on the Committee on Joint Monitoring for the improvement of the lives of women, and in Communications and Arts and Culture in the second parliamentary term. In the fourth Parliament, she served on the Joint Standing Committee Ethics and on the

Joint Monitoring Committee and was the Chairperson of the Multi-Party Women's Caucus (MPWC) in the fourth and fifth parliamentary terms. "The committees that were closest to my heart were those that dealt with women's rights," she said.

Asked whether women's issues were uniting and setting the agenda of the Multi-Party Women's Caucus, during her tenure as the Chairperson, she said: "The fifth term Multi-Party Women's Caucus's success was due to the unity of women across racial and political party lines. One of the critical achievements of the fifth MPWC was its advocacy for the removal of VAT from sanitary products. This would never have been achieved if there was no unity among women parliamentarians of that term.

"The fifth Multi-Party Women's Caucus committee agreed at the beginning of the fifth term that it will be a support system and structure for all women parliamentarians across political party lines, and that united women and set an agenda for success for the committee's chosen focus areas. Decision-making within the fifth MPWC was based on open-mindedness, persuasion and consensus, and not on political affiliation."

On the 50-50 gender representation threshold in government leadership positions, she said the split is about advocating for a balanced gender



Ms Rosalia Masefele Storey Morutoa

representation "for now". "I am saying for now because if you recall we come from advocating for 30% representation. There is no telling what the future women activists would call for, maybe they will say 51% representation to reflect the demographics of the population.

"My view is, let us achieve 50/50 representation first then see, because we have not even managed to achieve this balanced gender representation. South Africa is ranked number nine by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) at 46.6% for women in Parliament. We have also heard the President calling for 40% procurement favouring women-owned businesses. It does not mean it will remain at 40% forever, but as a starting point let us strive towards achieving this. Then we will review and evaluate at a later stage."

On gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), which has become a feature of the South African society, Ms Morutoa said: "Gender-based violence and femicide is threatening to reverse the gains that we fought for. It is a challenge that we must, as men and women, unite and fight against just like we did with apartheid." She

said the Covid-19 pandemic has also worsened the scourge of gender-based violence. "As we have seen an alarming increase in the number of reported cases during this time, for me gender-based violence and femicide is a new enemy that we must deal with urgently, but I am confident we will succeed, as we did with apartheid."

From her point of view, the most important thing to defeat gender-based violence and femicide is to understand its root causes. "When we understand its causes and drivers, we will be able to come up with effective programmes that will eliminate them. One of the known drivers is patriarchy and toxic masculinity that perpetuate GBVF. We therefore need to come up with social behaviour-change programmes aimed at eliminating these things," she added.

This should include programmes to change in the way boy and girl children are socialised. "But all the efforts towards defeating GBVF must be comprehensively coordinated, adequately funded, and responsive with various partners working together, including citizens as critical partners," she emphasised.



She said the national strategic plan (NSP) for gender-based violence and femicide, adopted by Cabinet, is promising to yield positive results in fighting against GBVF. “We all need to support the NSP and play a role in its implementation. We also need to fully support and ensure adequate funding of the National Gender-Based Violence Council, once established, which will drive the implementation of the national strategic plan,” she added.

Another critical aspect in defeating GBVF is effective oversight. Parliament should consider establishing a dedicated committee to oversee the implementation of

the NSP.

Different generations of women face unique challenges, Ms Morotua concluded. For example, women in 1956 were confronted by cruel apartheid laws and related policies. Pre-1994 women were excluded as negotiators during the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa). “Women have always been active in fighting narratives that are detrimental to their development. So let us unite across racial, political party lines, sexual orientation, and disabilities. Let us tackle our challenges and forge forward with our fight towards effective emancipation of all women in our diversity.”



# ‘Let’s move forward and say: forward we go, backwards never’

The struggle veteran Ms Lydia Komape-Ngwenya sent a message to the 2020 Women’s Parliament: “I thank this programme because it exposes all the ups and downs, the problems and the sufferings of women. I want to talk more about women and the land, particularly in the rural areas. Today is a day to celebrate Women’s Month so that our voices can be heard.

“But it is not only today and must not be only today. As the Women’s Month ends, we must continue to hold each other so that we can continue to fight and win all our battles as women. We, rural women depend on each other. We have been denied a valuable asset called land. We can till the land and feed our families. The apartheid laws used to call us minors.

“Women can own land and stop the curse of being independent. The only problem today is the implementation of the laws. We also lack progressive chiefs who can give us a piece of

land. Another problem of women is that we are divided and if we can be united and hold each other’s hand, we can see that women can change even the whole world.

“Women have got the ability, the power and enthusiasm because of the children we have brought on this earth. What you said about gender-based-violence happens because we never speak up. We only speak up during Women’s Month. We talk about our problems every day. Another reason we don’t speak is because of our dependence on men who abuse us, some of them.

“Women can make it; we can run the families. We can do everything without the assistance of a man. We must support one another, we must unite and we must make sure that every woman’s problem is my problem. We must be inquisitive when it comes to women’s problems. When we see a woman suffering we must find out what has happened to this woman.

The municipalities and chiefs have land, but don’t give it to women because they regard women as minors. Portfolio committee take some rounds. Agriculture Portfolio Committee, I have never seen you coming to our places to come and check how we survive and listen to our grievances as women. Come and see what we are doing.

We will never win if we don’t unite. Let’s grab back our dignity. Let’s grab back our independence. Let’s move forward and say: forward we go, backwards never. Women unite.



PARLIAMENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**WE MUST SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER  
,WE MUST UNITE AND WE MUST  
MAKE SURE THAT EVERY WOMAN’S  
PROBLEM IS MY PROBLEM**

The struggle veteran Ms Lydia Komape-Ngwenya



# Women's Parliament - Provinces develop action plans to curb violence against women and children



The nine provinces and the South African Local Government Association (Salga) gave an account of what they have done to deal with the scourge of gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) in their respective provinces since President Cyril Ramaphosa's tabling of the Emergency Response Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide and Related Matters, which initiated a three-sphere implementation process, **reports Nolizwi Magwagwa.**

The provinces reported that they have established provincial structures and developed detailed action plans aimed at responding and curbing the escalating spate of the violence against women and children in the provinces.

Addressing the Women's Parliament on the Eastern Cape Province, Ms Fezeka Nkomonye, MEC for Sport, Recreation, Art and Culture, said the province, like all the concerned citizens and patriots throughout the country, has also joined the national effort to fight the scourge of GBVF. She reported that the province instituted an interim GBVF steering committee, with the aim of developing a strategic plan in line with provincial needs.

Among other things, she said the province has made a commitment to open more sexual offences courts. It has also committed to establish traditional policing in rural communities, to strengthen GBVF intervention and to establish more Thuthuzela care centres in order to provide shelter and support to the victims of violence. It will also address systemic challenges such as the backlog of cases, delays in DNA testing and the availability of rape test kits in police stations.

The Acting Free State Premier, Ms Mamikie Qabathe, reported that the province has recently employed five GBV prevention officers. She said four of them are placed in four districts and one in the Metropolitan Municipality. The officers, according to Ms Qabathe, work with the municipalities and stakeholders to drive GBV programmes at municipal and districts levels. Through mass mobilisation, she said the province has trained and deployed men through the men's sector and the civil society sector of the provincial Aids Council to drive GBVF campaigns and education.

The Gauteng's MEC for Community Safety, Ms Faith Mazibuko, reported that the

province has observed that it has been adversely affected by the lockdown, especially when it comes to safety of women and children. "During this time we noticed trends whereby Gauteng became one of those top 30 stations that contributed nationally to challenges of gender-based violence. Even the crime stats of 2019/20 will reflect that Gauteng remained very high because of the number of rapes and sexual assaults," Ms Mazibuko said.

She noted that the province has a plan in place based on five pillars to push back the frontiers of GBVF. These pillars are: the prevention of gender-based violence, strengthening the criminal justice system, enhancement of the legal and policy framework, provision of adequate care support and healing for victims of violence, and the introduction of measures to improve the economic power of women in Gauteng.

A delegate representing KwaZulu-Natal said gender-based violence and femicide is widespread in the province. It is entrenched in its institutions, cultures and tradition, and occurs as a result of normative roles, expectation and unequal power relations between genders in our society. The delegate said in October

2019, KwaZulu-Natal's Provincial Government had established a GBV task team to roll out GBV campaign in all districts. The session heard that there are a number of programmes that have taken place in the province since the launch of the task team.

The Limpopo's MEC for Social Development, Ms Nkakareng Rakgoale, reported that the province is fully committed to the ideas of women's emancipation, equality and participation. "We have established a gender-based violence and femicide technical committee comprising of sector departments, universities, Commission on Gender Equality, the National Prosecuting Authority and Moral Regeneration," Rakgoale said.

She reported that the South African Police Service has reestablished the specialised unit called Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Unit in the province. The province is also funding 74 civil society organisations, which are currently rendering prevention, response, care support and healing programmes in collaboration with social development in the province. Ms Rakgoale said an amount of R72.2 million is being provided to support victim empowerment

centres in the province.

Mpumalanga Province's MEC for Social Development, Ms Thandi Shongwe, said the province has established multiparty caucuses at all the three districts and municipalities. "We have a functional women's caucus that sits quarterly. Its aim is to lobby and advocate for women's empowerment and to mediate the social divisions between males and females, which is deeply embedded in people's consciousness," she said.

She reported that the districts and local municipalities that report to the offices of the executive mayors have established special programmes with dedicated people to deal with women's empowerment as well as the scourge of GBV.

The Premier of the Northern Cape Province, Dr Zamani Saul, said the province has set up a task team comprising members from the departments of education, transport, safety and liaison. The task team meets weekly to address GBVF issues. "I'm pleased to advise that the task team has commenced work in a substantive manner, and with time we are confident that we will achieve our objectives in accordance with

our terms of reference," Dr Saul said.

He said the mass mobilisation programme aimed at training and deploying activists to all municipalities in the province has commenced. To date, 118 volunteers across the province have been trained and will render advocacy, awareness and support services to potential perpetrators and victims.

North West's Premier Prof Job

Mokgoro said the province has established processes and services that address and prevent GBVF. He told the Women's Parliament that the provincial Department of Social Development, in partnership with other key stakeholders, has developed provincial GBV plan in line with the national strategic plan. He further reported that non-governmental organisations have been funded to improve access to services for victims of GBVF. Capacity building

plans have been developed and implemented to ensure continuous professional development.

The Premier of the Western Cape, Premier Mr Alan Winde, reported that the province doesn't observe the 16 Days of Activism anymore, but rather runs campaigns throughout the year. He said the province hosts monthly programmes on the safety of women and children, where the government and civil society

organisations, especially women's organisations, meet to discuss issues of gender-based violence.

"We make sure that it is the whole of government, including the South African Police Service, Human Rights Commission, the Medical Research Council, South African Women Dialogue, social development departments, as well as the oversight departments – we all come together every single month and we will

now be doing it almost on a three-week basis as part of creating safety in our province," he said.

He also noted that the province runs a number of sessions linking gender-based violence with economics. "We have to make sure we enable women – because we all know that men hold women to ransom if they are not economically sound and have an economic sound footing," he added. 🌹

## Women MPs honour generations of women who championed the cause for women's emancipation

*President Cyril Ramaphosa's declaration of a policy to ensure that 40% of government procurement is allocated to women.*

The National Assembly's hybrid debate on National Women's Day honoured successive generations of women who championed the cause for women's emancipation. Sadly, it took place at a time when gender-based violence (GBV) is more prevalent than ever in South Africa, **writes Abel Mputing.**

Members of the National Assembly spelled out their party's policy positions on what needs to be done to deal with the systemic economic oppression of women in various spheres of South Africa's social and economic life.

Ms Moleboheng Modise (African National Congress, ANC) said given the long quest for women's freedom from patriarchy and gender discrimination, the resolute spirit of the 1956 Women's March is needed today more than ever before. However, much has been achieved since the Beijing Women's Conference held in 1995. "There are now 50% gender

parity policies as a result, and there are now more than ever before laws that promote and protect women's rights," she reckoned.

She welcomed President Cyril Ramaphosa's declaration of a policy to ensure that 40% of government procurement is allocated to women. "This, coupled with other initiatives announced by the Department of Trade and Industry would pave a way for women's economic empowerment," she added.

These policies are crucial, not only for humanitarian purposes, but also for inclusive and sustainable economic growth, because there would be no sustainable economic growth without the economic empowerment of women. "And it is time we declare that 'nothing for women without women'. Women must be at the centre of their own economic development initiatives."

Ms Nazley Sharif said the history of women is

one of pain, violence and subjugation. To this day, the ideals of gender equality in this country remain out of reach. Her personal story underlines the pervasiveness of acts of women abuse. "I will never forget a man who grabbed my back while I was young at a supermarket. After the incident I felt dirty and disgusted. I thought it was my fault," she said.

To others, the debate was nothing more than compliance with a box-ticking exercise. One such individual was Ms Ntombovuyo Mente (Economic Freedom Fighters), who said: "We stand here again to make hollow noises about gender-based violence, as we often do year in and year out. This has now become a tradition."

Referring to altercations between female and male Members of Parliament during the debate, she now knows why men undermine women's rights. It's happening right in Parliament, which should be protecting women. "Now we know the extent of this

scourge," she maintained. She said gender equality debates have become a box ticking exercise and women's plight has fallen on deaf ears. According to her, the legislators, the executive and the judiciary have failed the women of this country.

She lamented the granting of bail to the perpetrators of this scourge. "We law-makers must ensure that laws favour of the victims of gender-based violence, not the perpetrators of these crimes as is the case currently."

She urged the Portfolio Committee on Women and Children to call the National Prosecuting Authority to present its challenges regarding gender-based violence cases to it to ensure that they are resolved speedily to afford the victims of these crimes a recourse to justice.

Ms Duduzile Hlengwa said: "We need urgent state intervention and efficiency of policies if we are to deal with

this scourge decisively."

Ms Marie Elizabeth Sukers (African Christian Democratic Party) called for new policy formulations, as this year marks the 26th anniversary since the advent of our democracy, yet the dream of gender equality has not been achieved. She called on government to improve policies meant to deal specifically with the mental health of the survivors of gender-based violence. "We need a policy in this regard to safeguard the well-being and mental health of the victims of this scourge. This is an area that no much attention is paid to, but that has an everlasting effect on the family life of many women." 🌹





## Women's Parliament mobilises views of women from all spheres of society

*“If we have all the policies and strategies that we speak so eloquently about, what is the problem? I think implementation is very poor, we need to address that,” said Mr Khumalo.*

The 2020 Women Parliament included the voices of academics and civil society organisations, providing the legislative sector with an opportunity to listen to their perspectives on the issues challenges facing women, **writes Sakhile Mokoena.**

Violence against women is global problem. Presenting on the topic “Strengthening the rule of law to address gender-based violence and femicide”, Prof Rachel Jewkes from the South African Medical Research Council told the conference that intimate partner violence was the most common form of gender violence globally. The abuse can either be physical, sexual, emotional or economic.

Non-intimate partner attacks also occur and this form of violence includes rape and other forms of sexual violence, often by strangers and harassment by colleagues at work. “Other common forms

of gender-based violence globally include the trafficking of women, cultural practices such as ukuthwala (forced marriages) and female genital mutilation (not practised in South Africa).

According to Prof Jewkes, perpetrators of gender-based violence and femicide often held strong patriarchal and gender inequitable views. “Some have a history of abuse; their sense of self has been affected and they seek ways to gain power and they do this by being violent,” Prof Jewkes.

“Many of them were raised in poverty, or have financial problems, but GBV is not exclusively a problem of the poor. They are not very different from other men who are violent towards women, they are just more extreme,” argued Prof Jewkes.

She proposed the need for poverty reduction and

enhancing school completion for girls and boys as a key intervention to address GBV. In addition, measures to promote gender equality and action against all forms of violence of all forms should include vigorous gun control and a reduction in harmful alcohol use were some of the proposed interventions.

“We need to extend funding for mental health services and support for programmes for lay counselling, more vigorous enforcement of protection of children and parenting programmes and support for vulnerable parents, as well as programmes to build gender equity and counter the use of violence throughout the community,” Prof Jewkes said.

She added that a critical new role for the legislature is oversight of the work of the National Council on gender-based violence and femicide and its associated structures in implementing the National

Strategy Plan on GBV and Femicide and its budget. She also challenged Parliament to ensure that there is political support and funding for the programmes to address GBV and femicide.

Mr Bafana Khumalo from Sonke Gender Justice said in celebrating the passing of legislation and intervention strategies aimed at addressing GBV, the biggest concern was lack of implementation. “If we have all the policies and strategies that we speak so eloquently about, what is the problem? I think implementation is very poor, we need to address that,” said Mr Khumalo.

He also reasoned that the criminal justice system alone cannot solve the problem of gender violence, and a comprehensive intervention strategy must involve all sectors of society to prevent violence against women.

Another subject that was discussed at the Women’s Parliament is the issue of “gender pay gap” between men and women in the workplace. Prof Anita Bosch of the University of Stellenbosch Business School said while much has been done in South Africa to get employers to pay men and women equally, more still needed to be done.

Political parties represented in Parliament also joined the call to end gender-based violence and femicide by finalising reform of the integrated justice system. The Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Ms Sylvia Lucas, said the fight against GBV and femicide must not only be in August, but throughout the year. 🇿🇦





# Salga calls on municipalities to prioritise the safety of women and children in communities



Ms Thembisile Nkadimeng

The President of the South African Local Government Association (Salga), Ms Thembisile Nkadimeng, addressed the 2020 Women's Parliament on the topic: "A Local Government Perspective in implementing undertakings to gender-based violence and femicide", **writes Nolzwi Magwagwa.**

Ms Nkadimeng recommitted Salga to accelerate action in a collective effort to end violence against women and children in South Africa. She said the crime statistics report that was released by the Minister of Police for the period between April 2018 and March 2019 revealed the depth of the crisis. She said the report showed that nearly 3 000 women were murdered in that period, indicating 'a horrifying reality of the death of seven women a day' in South Africa. "We are a country in mourning and shock, as we once again grapple with the wicked and dreadful murders of women and children in this country, as a result of their gender and vulnerability," she said.

While South Africa has one of the most progressive and inclusive constitutions in the world, Ms. Nkadimeng noted, with a Bill of Rights proclaimed to be the cornerstone of democracy and laws that are human rights-focused, violence against women and children (VAWC) in South Africa remains rampant. "This is because the existence of laws alone does not ensure protection. As such, there is a growing need to ensure that the laws are not only 'good on paper' but practical too.

"As a country, we are reeling from the horrific reports of a spate of heartless slaughter of women across South Africa in recent days. We are a country in mourning and shock, as we grapple with once again the wicked and dreadful murders of women and children in this country".

She said municipalities should be strengthened to respond to gender-based violence as a key service delivery issue and work together with all the

*We are a country in mourning and shock, as we grapple with once again the wicked and dreadful murders of women and children in this country".*

other stakeholders through an integrated and multi-sectoral response and approach. The recently launched District Development Model will assist a lot in this regard, she added.

According to Ms. Nkadimeng if more women, including young women, are elected when ward committees are formed and are encouraged to be vocal, that will ensure that campaigns on GBV find expression and that issues of ordinary women on the ground are taken into consideration.

Local government interventions, she said, must include prevention strategies to make communities safer by planning and improving safety in public places. The strategies include clearing of bushes around public areas such as cemeteries, parks, bus stops, taxi ranks, public toilets, and unused buildings. These areas must also be provided with adequate lighting.

Municipalities are also encouraged to promote neighbourhood and community watches in their communities to ensure that the safety of women and children is guaranteed everywhere. Ms Nkadimeng said publicity of the places of services of care for women and children in the community must be publicised in the community media, and via pamphlets and newsletters.

Salga encourages the municipalities to change the apartheid spatial planning which it believes perpetuates the domination of women and violation of their rights. 🇿🇦



PARLIAMENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**SALGA ENCOURAGES THE MUNICIPALITIES TO CHANGE THE APARTHEID SPATIAL PLANNING WHICH IT BELIEVES PERPETUATES THE DOMINATION OF WOMEN AND VIOLATION OF THEIR RIGHTS.**

MS THEMBISILE NKADIMENG



# “The state alone, cannot stop the scourge of gender-based violence and femicide”



To mark Women’s Month, women leaders in Parliament sent messages of support and encouragement to South African women.

These women leaders included the Deputy Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Ms Sylvia Lucas:

Fellow South Africans, the world is faced with a medical emergency far greater than that we have experienced in over a century. Never before in the history of our democracy has our country been confronted with such a severe situation. As we commemorate Women’s Month this year, South African women continue to face more pervasive levels of gender-based violence, which have become more brutal and vicious in nature. We therefore call on the judiciary to send a clear message to all the perpetrators of gender-based violence by ensuring that all those found guilty receive maximum sentences for their crimes.

We also call on all South African women to join us in our quest to review the 1994 Women’s Charter for Effective Equality. The review sessions seek to take stock and assess the women’s rights regime in its entirety, including all policy

and legislation instruments in place, by identifying gaps in legislation and making the necessary proposals for amendments.

The state alone, or one group or organisation for that matter, cannot stop the scourge of gender-based violence and femicide. It requires all sectors of society. Let us therefore be reminded during this Women’s Month that we must continue to actively forge a united front in a broad range of women’s formations and organisations. Let us stand together to ensure that the scourge of patriarchy, gender-based violence and femicide comes to an end.

Let us all stay safe, let us wash our hands, let us sanitise and let us – as South Africans and particularly as women of South Africa – enjoy and commemorate our Women’s Day and our Women’s Month.

Ms Lydia Komape-Ngwenya (unionist, land and women’s rights activist)

August is a great month for our heroines in South Africa, who laid the foundation for us. August the 9th is a great day for the South African women, when we think of our great leaders like Albertina Sisulu, Winnie Mandela, Helen

Joseph, Charlotte Maxeke, Lillian Ngoyi, Mmakgoshi Madinoge and many others who really laid the foundation for us.

They really struggled and tried to hold the knife on the sharp end as they did. They gave the baton to us and we fought apartheid, we fought patriarchy, we are still fighting patriarchy, which is a very difficult task today, it needs us women to come together.

There will be no South Africa if South African women are not united. I would like to urge the youngsters, because that’s where our hope lies, that if you work hard to continue to carry the baton that we are giving you when we are still alive. At the moment we are not able to run around, but we can still empower you. The best thing you should do is to unite and fight patriarchy, fight women abuse, fight child abuse and domestic violence.

We cannot tolerate the abuse. We cannot stand the abuse that women are faced with every day. The culture itself oppresses women. They even have idioms that promote oppression, such as “lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi” and “Mosadi ke chwene o jewa mabogo.”

That makes our women, even if they want to leave the abusive relationships or marriages, scared because they know that other women will curse them.

Ke nako basadi (it is time, women) to stand up, ke nako (it is time) to know that without women involvement the country will never be, the world will never be, because we are the ones who brought everybody on Earth and we must also lead. Our Constitution says we are all equal, but it has never been respected up to now. We call on our government

to prioritise women because we die every day. We are sick and tired of losing our children that are the future of South Africa.

Young women please stand up. We are still alive. Approach us and we will empower you more and tell you where we come from, and you can work from there. We want to strengthen you. We didn’t receive this government on a silver plate. You must know that you have to struggle to get what you want, you have to take risks, starting from our homes because of patriarchy. Patriarchy must go and who must do it? It’s you, yourselves, because you are educated. You are not like us and you can make a lot of things better. 🇷🇺



**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**NCOP DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON,  
SYLVIA LUCAS, CALLS FOR UNITED  
ACTION AGAINST GBV**

- DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
PROVINCES