REMARKS BY KWAZULU-NATAL PREMIER NOMUSA DUBE-NCUBE DURING THE LAUNCH OF THE CAMPAIGN OF 16 DAYS OF NO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN, DURBAN, 25 NOVEMBER 2022

Good Afternoon!

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of you for taking time to be part of this important occasion where we gather to renew our efforts and mobilise each other to eliminate the scourge of gender based violence against Women and Children.

We have come here in uMlazi, one of the townships known for its contribution in the fight against injustice. This is the township that is home to struggle human rights activists such as Victoria and Griffiths Mxenge. We have come here to gather more strength and to source more energy and inspiration as we wage the battle we must win against the abuse of women and children.

We are inspired and strengthened by all of you. We also wish to commend the role that is increasingly being played by all our social partners in combating violence perpetrated against women, girls, and children. The fight is huge, and in this regard, we call on many more members of the community to lend a hand in the battle against GBV.

It was our President Nelson Mandela who said, and I quote: “Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression… Our endeavours must be about the liberation of the woman, the emancipation of the man and the liberty of the child.”

Today we converged here in uMlazi two days after the Minister of Police General Bheki Cele released the latest crime statistics for South Africa. The numbers do not make good reading at all, even though we have recorded a drop in some of the crimes. According to the latest figures, women are most unsafe in Umlazi and Inanda here in our province. Today we take a stance to reverse this bad reputation

We gather here to send a very clear and powerful message that the badge of Gender Based Violence and Femicide, does not belong to the people of uMlazi and KwaZulu-Natal.

We are here united in the call for all of us to speak out against gender based violence and femicide.

Gender Based violence is a horrendous violation of people’s rights.

In the recent crime statistics, uMlazi has still recorded high numbers of people who are shot, stabbed, raped, killed and maimed by fellow human beings. This is far from achieving our objectives of a free, safe and peaceful KwaZulu-Natal.

The rate of crime is an indicator of how much we value each other as citizens of this earth on one hand, and how our institutions are able to intervene on our behalf especially those most vulnerable in society.

Our Constitution defines the right to life as an inalienable right that no one should take away from you. Indeed, it further says that “everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected”.

In the latest crime Statistics Minister Cele also reported that 9 516 rape cases were opened with SAPS, a national decline of 500 for the same period last year. While 3 780 people were raped in the homes of the rapists or of the victims, a total of 1 546 people were raped in public places such as streets, parks and beaches. This are shocking numbers. We must however not be shocked but act!

The Minister also informed us that public transportation such as buses, taxis and trains are the third most likely places of occurrence for rape cases. Not only are women unsafe in public, our homes are no longer places of refuge when we can feel safe and sleep soundly. As if this was not enough, women are not safe in public transportation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, all over the world, how public transport operates, and treats women, children and tourists is a sign that all people are equal and are wanted as key players in society.

According to Minister Cele the reporting “period of April to June shows that South Africa was brutal and dangerous for women and children”.

From April to June 2022, 855 women and 243 children were killed in South Africa. There were over 11 00 Assault GBH cases, with female victims, and 1 670 such cases involving children. Children are also being murdered at institutions of learning which includes day care facilities, primary and high schools and tertiary institutions.

When it comes to murder, firearms are three times likely to be the weapon of choice in all the reported murders, 2 766 people were shot to death.

People are most likely to be shot dead in KZN than anywhere else in the country. There were 912 of KwaZulu-Natal murders resulting from firearms followed by the Gauteng Province with 697 deaths attributed to firearms. Contrary to popular opinion, there were 498 people who died from gunshot wounds in the Western Cape Province during the period April to June this year.

It is clear that firearms continue to be a menace to society especially those that are illegal. The firearms play a major role in the murders and attempted murders, and particularly those involving women and children.

KZN GBV Plan

Fellow citizens, when a woman is killed or dies, so does the family. Women are central to the life of any society. We all have a duty to stretch every muscle in our body to eliminate the abuse of women and children.

One of the challenges faced by women is with regard to protection orders which are often violated by the perpetrator.

On Wednesday, as we were preparing for today, we had to leave the meeting of the Executive Council to attend to a case of a young woman who was brutally abused by her fellow male school mates here in uMlazi. The woman is currently in hospital. This is a despicable act, which we condemn in the strongest terms possible.

We are asking ourselves, a question, what kind of society are we creating when young people are involve in the violence against a young women. What kind of Men are we going to have in future if at such a young age, boys will unleash violence at a young girl?

Surely somebody must have seen but turned a blind eye because it was not you today. Tomorrow they will come for you or your family member. It is important that we must expose the violent criminals who attacks our woman and children. Looking away is not an option. Let us expose them in a safe way. We now have cell phones, let us take videos without the perpetrators seeing and give them to law enforcement authorities. We are following up on this case so that justice is done.

This is one of the many examples of the scourge of gender based violence that we must fight to eliminate in every ward in the province.

KZN PLAN TO TACKLE GBV SCOURGE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme for the 16 Days of Activism Campaign for 2022 is: “Socio-Economic Rights and Empowerment to build Women’s Resilience against Gender-Based Violence and Femicide: Connect, Collaborate, Contract!”

In KwaZulu-Natal the 16Days Campaign forms the centre point of government’s comprehensive 365 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children. During the 16Days period, Government together with civil society and the private sector host a series of community and sector dialogues and activities to foster a collaborative effort in dealing with GBVF.

As the theme says, we want to: “Connect, Collaborate, Contract”.

Our position is clear, no woman should be killed just because she is arguing with her partner or has decided she wants to leave the marriage or relationship. That women and girls are still seen as on objects to be violated by some men is the reason the word has this focus day.

Today we revive the KZN Anti-GBVF Plan which was launched in 2019 following horrific incidents of violence and murder of women. In 2022, we are able to use more digital technology to report incidents of violence and to track and locate victims. We will do better and better until we win. We will never give up.

Today we can deploy the latest technology to manage the data and to use the data to monitor and evaluate whether we are making progress or not. One of the elements we need to implement and utilise is the use of Geo-location to locate victims and survivors quickly, use of a Please call me option, and a Skype capacity service for people with disabilities.

As part of the KZN Anti-GBVF Plan we call for Dialogues on Moral Regeneration and Social Cohesion. We need to get all sectors of KwaZulu-Natal talking about GBV and Femicide. All sectors must dialogue to find solutions and to be part of a new generation of men and women who can live together in peace and harmony. Connect, Collaborate, Contract.

Through the Department of Social Development’s survivor based intervention programmes, women are given psycho-social support services, rehabilitated, reintegrated and empowered through Shelters, White door Centres and Civil Society Organisations.

The DSD Call Centre where clients receive professional services from qualified Social Workers during the day and after hours is 087 158 3000. The call centre handles a variety of complaints /incidents relating to Foster Care, Old Age Pension, Child Support and Disability Grants, Domestic Violence, Child Abuse and Substance Abuse that require Social Workers and other government work.

The province’s programme is to provide a cohesive strategic framework to guide the provincial response as an overarching and Multi-faceted programme for prevention, education, empowerment, response, care and support on gender-based violence.

We call on the Inter-Faith Community to continue to play their role to feed to souls of our communities and to preach morality and the importance of good citizenship.

These dialogues must target youth and the old wherever they are to be found. We will continue to target Institutions of Higher Learning and TVET colleges to promote Safer and Friendly Institutions for young women.

Our institutions should remain places of learning and not dens for murderers. At the same time people with disabilities will not be left behind and will be trained in areas of assertiveness and safety.

Supporting Women Enterprises

It is very important that women are empowered economically. Economically independence is a route to equality between genders and couples. More funding for business should be made available to women and girls in order to correct the unequal ownership of the economy between men and women.

Operation Vula Fund and Youth Business Development Fund in addition to all the sector focused business support agencies like ADA, ITHALA and others, and all the departments are expected to demonstrate increased support for businesses owned by women and girls.

As part of implementing Radical Economic Transformation commodities are set aside for SMMEs and cooperatives and with women as a central target. Other identified commodities such as Agricultural produces coordinated through RASET. These are furniture manufacturing, detergents, clothing and textile especially for uniforms of government employees and protective clothes, building material, Pulp and Paper for Women Empowerment.

We expect the Department of Transport to impose a Minimum 35% in all major contracts issued by the department targeting Female Owned cooperatives and Social Enterprises. Other opportunities include manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, oceans economy, oil-and gas, transport and logistics and other identified sectors. It is important that labour-absorptive sectors are targeted as these have the potential position KwaZulu-Natal as a leading regional economy.

These economic empowerment programmes will also target Women who are victims of crime, women with disability, foster parents, female headed households, and widows with no income.

These provincial responses are in line with the National Strategy as unveiled by President Cyril Ramaphosa for the first time in 2019 as national response to make South Africa a safer place for women, children and gender non-conforming individuals.

This is in line with the National Development Plan vision that one day all people in South Africa are and feel safe. The Presidential 5 Point Emergency Plan was anchored on the following pillars: - ▪ Prevention, education and awareness ▪ Strengthening the criminal justice system ▪ Enhance the legal and policy framework ▪ Ensuring adequate care, support and healing for victims of violence ▪ Strengthening the economic empowerment of women Engaging all society against GBVF Programme Director let us mobilise all of society using structures like Operation Sukuma Sakhe and the media to drive anti-crime and anti-GBVF campaign messages.

To deal with GBVF all platforms should be used to influence behaviour change of men towards women, disease and lifestyle as well as focusing on behaviour change for young people between the ages of 15-24 years.

One of these platforms is Sport Against Crime to address youth substance abuse through sporting activities. Strengthening the life skills of youth is a key objective in order to minimize risk factors and maximize protective factors related to crime, violence and drug use. As government, we want to use this period and campaign to collaborate with all our stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, Amakhosi, traditional healers, and our faith -based organisations to engender a collaborative approach in fighting the violence directed at women and children - Connect, Collaborate, Contract Working together, we must fight toxic masculinities, patriarchy, and all cultural practices and social norms that perpetuate gender inequality.

In the end, we want to spearhead the fostering of new social values and building healthy social connectedness. We want to promote access to caring and sensitive services to all survivors by front line workers capacitated and supported within systems that are resourced, integrated and aligned.

We call for an approach that addresses key structural drivers such as gender inequality, the gender biases within the economy and the historical and contextual factors that give rise to the GBVF crisis in the country.

Let us together build a KwaZulu-Natal that is free from the blemishes of gender-based violence and femicide.

Thank You very much!