
MEDIA STATEMENT

Issued by the Department of Women, Youth & Persons with Disabilities

Attention: Journalists and News Editors

Pretoria, 08 March 2021

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MINISTER MAITE NKOANA-MASHABANE WISHES ALL WOMEN A HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

As we celebrate International Women's Day today, 8th March 2020, the Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Person with Disabilities Maite Nkoana-Mashabane encourages all women to unite in making the women of the past proud, the women of the present inspired, and to provide the women of the future with a new world vision.

Established in 1911, International Women's Day is a major day of global celebration for the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future. It is a day in which women from around the world unite in thoughts, prayers, struggles, hopes and dreams.

International Women's Day (8 March 2020) is celebrated under the theme "I AM GENERATION EQUALITY: REALIZING WOMEN'S RIGHTS. This theme is aligned with UN Women's new multi-generational campaign, *Generation Equality*, which marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The theme acknowledges the emerging global consensus that despite some progress, real change has been painfully slow for the majority of women and girls around the world. Today, not a single country can claim to have achieved gender equality, and women and girls are faced with multiple obstacles that remain unchanged in law and in culture.

South Africa produced its Beijing + 25 Report tracking progress in achieving equality over the last 5 years (2014-2019). The report confirms that gender inequality is a global phenomenon.

Over the past 25 years women have played a critical role in nation building and strengthening state institutions in South Africa. However, women continue to face deeply patriarchal systems which manifest in new ways and forms. Government and civil society must continue to squash misogynistic ideas that seek to relegate women to second class citizens.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane will celebrate International Women's Day 2020 in the Free State Province under the Theme: *Generation Equality* by participating in the official opening of the Albertina Sisulu Women's Training Centre. A centre where women will be trained in designing clothes and arts. There will also be the opening of the Skills Development Centre for Women in the town of Tweeling that is equipped with a training facility that will assist women to learn how to create and develop goods and products with the end goal of alleviating poverty and creating sustainable employment for themselves.

As South Africa assumes the AU Chairship, we remind South Africa of Agenda 2063 – Africa's roadmap for a better future, which states that the continent must end all harmful social practises and remove all barriers to quality healthcare and education for women and girls. The continent's leaders have affirmed that women must have equal economic opportunities including rights to owning productive land, access to financial services, as well as equal access to market participation.

As a country we will continue to address extreme manifestations of inequality like gender-based violence through the National Strategic Plan (NSP) and a GBVF Council that will coordinate efforts and resources across government and civil society in ending this scourge. The department continues to work towards strengthening the National Gender Machinery – organs of state and civil society in driving the rollout of the broader gender agenda.

The Sanitary Dignity Implementation Framework is another milestone to be celebrated as we empower young girls through the distribution of free sanitary pads, and improving education on menstruation. We call upon government, civil society, private sector, big business and intergovernmental organisations be more gender-responsive in their budgeting and planning, as we continue to monitor progress made in realising justice for women.

The department wishes to join other government departments and civil organisations in wishing all women success during this International Women's Day. "Let us all make individual pledges that I AM GENERATION EQUALITY, and we will realize women's rights in this decade. We individually must choose to challenge stereotypes, fight bias, broaden perceptions, improve situations and above all celebrate women's achievements from 1911 to 2020," said Minister Nkoana-Mashabane.

Ends

Follow the conversation on #generationequality and #internationalwomensday2020

For interviews contact Ms Mmabatho Ramompi on 076 480 3513 /
mmabatho.ramompi@women.gov.za

For further information contact Mr Shalen Gajadhar on 060 979 4235 /
shalen.gajadhar@women.gov.za

Know and Share these contact details:

GBV Command Centre: 0800 428 428 / *120*7867# from any cell phone

Persons with disabilities, SMS 'help' to 31531

Women Abuse Helpline: 0800 150 150

Child line: 0800 055 555

SAPS Crime Stop: 0860 10111 / SMS Crime Line: 32211

GBVF-related service complaints (SAPS): 0800 333 177 /
complaintsnodalpoint@saps.gov.za

National AIDS Helpline: 0800 012 322

National Human Trafficking Helpline: 0800 222 777

Suicide Helpline: 0800 567 567

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