



**MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**REMARKS BY MINISTER
HONOURABLE MAITE NKOANA-MASHABANE
DURING THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**Theme "*Building a conscious youth in the fight against GBVF
and using the NYP as a catalyst of change.*"**

13 December 2020

Programme Director

Comrade Mabuse Mpe, National Chairperson of Young Communist
League of South Africa

Comrade Tinyiko Ntini, National General Secretary of the YCLSA

Other Office Bearers and Officials of the YCLSA

Comrades of National Committee!

Good Day, Dumelang, Ndi Masiare, Molo, Abisheni!

I am humbled by your invitation to address this important meeting of the National Committee of the Young Communist League of South Africa (YCLSA).

Last Thursday, 10th December 2020 we concluded the United Nations led 16 Days Activism Campaign for No Violence against Women and Children 2020.

While as a country we have embraced this UN led Campaign, we are going beyond the 16 Days of Activism Campaign and are committed to the 365 Days as a more inclusive and sustained approach to focus on behaviour change campaign.

In this regard, it is a clarion call on every South African at national, provincial, and district levels.

It is an important time for us to reflect on the progress we have made and the challenges we continue to face in building a society free from fear and violence.

This is also an opportune moment to reflect on your role as young people in combating Gender-Based Violence and Femicide in our country.

In this regard, the Young Communist League of South Africa has a unique role to contribute to this noble given your strategic position

as a vanguard of our youth.

As articulated in article 4 (f) and (g) of the YCLSA constitution, the League is committed to *rejecting and fighting against the abuse of women and children as well as fighting patriarchy in all forms of their manifestation.*

Comrades,

Violence against women and children has escalated to the extent that as a country we have declared it a second pandemic after COVID-19. As leaders of our people,

LET US SAY NO TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN,

LET US SAY NO TO RAPE,

LET US ENSURE THE PERPETRATORS OF THESE CRIMES ARE
PURNISHED BY OUR COURTS.

Earlier this year, government adopted the National Strategic Plan (NSP), which is a blueprint towards our collective efforts to eradicating Gender-Based Violence and Femicide. The NSP comprises of six key pillars that, if effectively implemented, will

contribute significantly to tackling this pandemic.

These six pillars are:

1. Accountability, Leadership and Coordination
2. Prevention and Restoration of Social Fabric
3. Protection, Safety and Justice,
4. Response, Care, Support and Healing
5. Economic Empowerment
6. Research and Information systems

While all pillars of the NSP are important, pillar 2 seeks to harness all stakeholders to contribute to prevention of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide and rebuilding a socially cohesive society.

The pillar also focuses on programmatic interventions and the development of a mass media behaviour change campaign in line with the framework as approved by Cabinet in November 2019

While government and civil society are doing their part to work towards the eradication of gender-based violence, it is crucial that the youth of our country also do their part to eradicate this persistent pandemic.

We therefore call on the YCLSA to contribute to eradicating this pandemic and integrate the NSP in all your programmes and activities.

Programme Director,

Youth of our country continue to face serious challenges, and key amongst them is the problem of unemployment. It is not an understatement that this challenge has reached crisis proportions.

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the second quarter of 2020 indicated that unemployment stood at 30.8%, which was the highest jobless rate since ever recorded.

More worryingly, the unemployment rate of youth aged 25-34 was more than double that of the age group 45-54 (37.3% vs 17.5%). It gets worse when you look at the unemployment rate among the youth aged between 15 and 24 which stands above 60% during the Quarter two QLFS. More than 6 out of every ten young people is out of work, and that is eternally worrying.

This picture is gloomier, when we consider the staggering numbers of those who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) are approximately 3.5 million of age's between 15-24.

Unemployment rates are typically higher for young women, while youth in rural areas face different challenges from those in urban areas.

In addition, young people with disabilities continue to face enormous challenges in the labour market as they are highly likely to be socially excluded and marginalized.

Comrades,

These are not just statistics. They are people with hopes, dreams and capacities, who could be contributing to their communities and country. We know that the lockdown as a result of COVID-19 intensified the problem and continues to threaten livelihoods

Clara Zetkin, who is the founder of International Women's Day said: "All the many brands of suppression – racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, classism (and we can add GBVF) – are historical; they have not been always with us. It was not ever thus. And it's not going to be this way, come the revolution."

This emphasises the need for radical action in dealing with the many harmful challenges that our youth face today, including high unemployment, lack of sufficient quality skills, gender based-violence and more.

The National Youth Policy (NYP) and the NSP are key policy instruments for all of society to tackle the root causes of challenges that face our youth, including young women and youth with disabilities.

Their approval by Cabinet are a clarion call to action for all of society. The situation cannot remain as is.

I wish to once again remind you that as young leaders, you need to represent hope, vigor and revolutionary spirit among our youth.

As such, it is time to reclaim your space amongst the youth as a "think thank" that guide the most vibrant strata of society – the youth. There is a yearning for conscious leadership amongst the youth to soberly reflect the class struggle and how it impacts their own development.

The NYP 2030 emphasises what we call holistic youth development. This implies that because youth face multiple

challenges, our intervention must deal with multiple causes at once. We must focus on their socio-economic needs, as well as strengthening the institutions that deliver services and programmes.

The NYP also highlights the following with regards to GBVF:

- a) The National Gender-based Violence and Femicide Strategic Plan (NSP) (2020-2030) should be fully implemented
- b) The country must strengthen the current legislation dealing with gender-based violence by amending the three key legislations, namely the Domestic Violence Act; the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Act; and the Criminal and Related Matters Act; and
- c) We must implement prevention and early interventions to reduce the proliferation of violence against women.

Furthermore, the policy prioritises the following pillars:

- ✓ Economic transformation, entrepreneurship and job creation;
- ✓ Quality education, skills and second chances;
- ✓ Physical and mental health promotion, including dealing with pandemics;

- ✓ Nation building and social cohesion; and
- ✓ Effective and responsive youth development machinery.

To ensure economic transformation, entrepreneurship and job creation, the National Youth Policy places the Economic Reconstruction Recovery Plan and the Mass Employment Strategy to build a new economy as key instruments.

As part of institutionalising the implementation of the NSP and the National Youth Policy, a number of processes have been employed by the Department to enforce accountability, provide leadership and coordinate implementation.

However, society relies on conscious interest groups like yourselves to influence the policy direction and implementation.

I have recently met with you and other formations to allow your sharp minds to shape the national youth policy and the NYDA Amendment Bill. I was pleased by the quality of the engagement.

Comrades,

I call upon you to continue being active, and must not be found missing in action on the issue of eradicating GBVF and implementation of the NYP.

Let us work together including in the context of the Progressive Youth Alliance and its structures to confront the challenges facing us.

Let us mobilise our youth to be active change agents and to be able to hold all of government and civil society to account on the commitments that are made in the NYP and the NSP.

As OR Tambo once said, *“a country or a movement that does not value or invest in its youth does not deserve its future”*. Let us together show that we are a generation that can ensure positive youth development outcomes, and eradicate Gender-Based Violence and Femicide in our lifetime.

I thank you!