



**SPEECH BY THE MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY FOR WOMEN,
YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ON THE NATIONAL
CRISIS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE**

HONOURABLE MS SINDISIWE CHIKUNGA

**At the Memorial Service - Elizabeth “Tsontso” Moselakgomo
Date: Thursday, 17th September 2026**

Time: Minister’s Speaking Slot: 10 minutes

Venue: Civic Centre, Kempton Park

**Programme Director,
The bereaved Moselakgomo family,
The precious, courageous daughter of our departed sister,
Elizabeth “Tsontso”,
Members of the extended family, friends, and colleagues,
Colleagues, Cabinet Ministers, and Deputy Ministers
present here today,
The Premier of Gauteng, Honourable Panyaza Lesufi,
Members of the Provincial Executive Council of Gauteng,
The Executive Mayor and Councillors of the Ekurhuleni
Metropolitan Municipality,
Our revered Faith-based, Community, and Traditional
leaders,**

**Representatives of Government and Civil Society
Formations,
Members of the media houses present,
Women and men of Kempton Park, Ekurhuleni, and the
broader South African landscape,**

**I greet you all this morning in the Holy Name of the Father,
the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**

Fellow South Africans,

**We are gathered here today in a time of profound, unspeakable
mourning. We gather because families are shattered, because a
community and a country are **reeling in deep shock**, and
because **eight women have been violently, brutally taken
from us in one single locality.****

How can this ever be accepted as normal? Are we living
among cold-blooded savages who kill at will, leaving families in
utter disbelief and terror? **No! Enough is enough! The women
of South Africa are justifiably, righteously angry.** They are
angry because **these heartless criminals treat our hard-won
laws and our fundamental human dignity with utter
contempt.** They are reducing the sacred lives of our women and
girls to a mere death sentence.

Yesterday, I visited the bereaved Moselakgomo family right here
in Kempton Park. I went there in my capacity as a Minister, but
more fundamentally, I went there as a woman and a mother. In
that home, I **met Elizabeth's eight-year-old daughter.** I was
**deeply moved, broken, yet inspired by her immense
courage.** This little girl wrote her mom a heartbreaking
goodbye letter in her own handwriting, listing all the things
her mother will miss out on now that she has become

“God’s newest and best angel.” Unimaginable grief, met with such profound grace, brought me to tears.

This is the brutal geometry of trauma—it ripples outward, destroying everything it touches. For a child, trauma shatters the sanctuary of innocence, replacing a mother's warmth with a cold, lifelong fear. For a family, it tears out the very anchor that holds them together, leaving a hollow, permanent ache around the dinner table. For a community, repeated violence breeds a paralysing terror, turning neighbours into strangers and safe streets into hunting grounds. And for our nation, this accumulated grief wounds our collective soul, draining our moral authority and forcing us to confront the painful truth that our societal fabric is tearing apart at the seams.

We must speak the truth, no matter how uncomfortable it is. The trauma we witness here in Kempton Park is not an isolated incident; **it is a symptom of a systemic, undeclared warfare waged against the women of this country.**

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) National Prevalence Study on GBVF laid bare the staggering, grim reality of our nation. The data shows that 33.1% of South African women—more than 7.3 million mothers, daughters, and sisters—have experienced physical violence in their lifetime.

Furthermore, nearly 10% have survived sexual violence, meaning over 35% of women over the age of 18 in this country have been subjected to physical or sexual abuse. These are not mere numbers on paper; they are a tragic registry of our nation's daughters who have been forced to look evil in the eye.

Therefore, we gather to **Remember ... Sikhumbula... re Gopula...** We remember daughters, mothers, and friends whose lives mattered. Specifically, we gather to remember Elizabeth “Tsontso” Moselakgomo, described by her family as “the glue that held them together.”

Fellow mourners, Elizabeth **should have come home.** She went out for a routine run, a simple exercise, and she should have come home. Women have an absolute, unchallengeable right to occupy public spaces, to walk, to run, and to live freely. We cannot, and we will not, continue telling women to watch what they wear or where they walk. The burden of safety must shift from the victims to the perpetrators.

To turn this tide, our **government is implementing decisive, uncompromising measures to protect our citizens.** Let us outline the three non-negotiable legal imperatives that govern our response today:

Firstly, we are tightening the net of protection across every single sector of society. In terms of the law, employers at all levels have a strict **legal obligation to check the National Register for Sexual Offenders before any appointment is finalised. It is non-negotiable: you must verify that the name of any intended employee does not appear on this register.** No predator will find safe harbour, employment, or a hiding place in our schools, our businesses, or our public institutions. Any employer who fails to comply with this legislative directive will face criminal liability.

Secondly, let the message be loud and clear to those who perpetrate **Gender-Based Violence and Femicide: the law has evolved to crush your cruelty.** Under the newly effected

legal amendments, **offenders of GBVF will be given a life sentence, and they will not be considered for parole. If you choose to take a life or shatter a soul, you forfeit your right to freedom forever.** A life sentence will mean exactly that—life behind bars without compromise. **The keys will be turned, and the doors will remain shut.**

Thirdly, to every abuser and killer hiding in the shadows, know this: we will use any and every means possible to find you, track you down, and prosecute you to the absolute furthest extent of the law. There is no corner of this country deep enough to hide from the reach of justice. We will hunt you with the full, relentless weight of the state. Our intelligence, our law enforcement, and our judicial structures will work in tandem to ensure you face the consequences of your actions.

Enough is enough.

We owe this to Elizabeth. We owe this to her eight-year-old daughter. We owe this to every woman and girl who lives in fear. Let us unite, let us act, and let us reclaim the soul of our nation.

Following the historic classification of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) as a National Disaster, our government collectively developed an explicit, aggressive Action Plan. We recognized that weak laws create loopholes for criminals, and we moved swiftly to close them.

Legislatively, we have laid a solid, unshakeable foundation. We have structurally overhauled our legal machinery by enacting and enforcing:

- The **Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act**
- The **Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Act**
- The **Domestic Violence Amendment Act**

Furthermore, we have stripped away the loopholes that allowed violent abusers back onto our streets. We have officially removed the power of police and prosecutors to grant station bail in GBV cases through vital amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act, ensuring only courts can make that decision after a rigorous hearing.

But laws alone cannot fight this war. I am pleased to announce a historic milestone: the **National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide has been formally established under Act 9 of 2024.** Its board has been **successfully inaugurated, inducted, and set to work.** We are **now expecting a country-wide, Comprehensive Action Plan from this Council.** This statutory mechanism will systematically strengthen our prevention strategies, drive multi-sectoral accountability, and ensure that our interventions reach from national boardrooms down to our municipal wards.

While we have successfully identified Elizabeth and two other daughters of the soil, a grim reality remains: five bodies remain unidentified out of the eight recovered in this locality. Five families are out there right now, waiting, wondering, and living in agonizing suspense.

I make this urgent, solemn appeal to the public: if **someone you know is missing, if a sister, a mother, or a friend has not returned home, come forward.** Help us identify these five remaining souls so we can restore their names, accord them

a dignified burial, and pursue their killers with precise intent. Do not remain silent.

To the men of South Africa, I speak directly and unequivocally to you: **Stop it. Stop murdering women. Stop raping women. Stop violating women.**

True masculinity does not destroy; it builds and protects. Our government is now heavily focused on promoting positive masculinity. We are actively engaging schools, churches, and traditional leaders to socialise boys and men toward respect, equality, and protection. We must dismantle the toxic patriarchies that breed entitlement and violence in our homes and communities.

President Ramaphosa has directed that these cases be prioritised and that no stone be left unturned. **The directive from the highest office in the land is clear: those responsible must face the full might of the law. Law enforcement agencies are under strict orders to utilize every investigative resource available.**

When we leave this civic centre today, let Elizabeth's memory challenge us in what we do next. **When we speak about prevention, when we enforce laws, and when we demand that men change—remember her. Remember the letter written by her eight-year-old daughter. Let that heartbreak be the fuel that drives our daily resistance against GBVF.**

To Elizabeth, in the beautiful, pure words of your daughter, you are **“God's newest and best Angel.” We will not let your death be in vain. We will fight for your justice, and we will protect the daughter you left behind.**

Robala ka kgotso, Tsontso.

I thank you.