

NATIONAL SUMMIT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE



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1 - 2 NOVEMBER 2018

#GBVSummit

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DECLARATION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SUMMIT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE

2 NOVEMBER 2018

Declaration of the Presidential Summit Against Gender Based Violence and Femicide

PREAMBLE

WE, the one thousand two hundred delegates of the South African Presidential National Summit Against Gender based Violence (GBV), who are survivors, the government of South Africa and South African society more broadly come from all walks of life, young and old, from urban, rural areas, all provinces, all sexual orientations and gender identities, people with disabilities, migrant women and women living with HIV and all those who experienced GBV.

NOTING THAT:

- (1) It is critical to have the involvement of many sectors of South African society, across different experiences and identities, which have contributed to challenging GBV over the years, including organisations broadly and those working specifically with children, the older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants, LGBTQI, academia, labour, business, media, development agencies, government and other relevant structures;
- (2) The summit is primarily an outcome of the mobilization efforts by women living in South Africa, social movements and civil society. Marches by women under the umbrella of #TheTotalShutdown and the occupation of the Union Buildings on 1 August 2018 demanded a national summit against gender-based violence. The President responded to the demand to hold the National Summit based on the Memorandum of the 24 Demands. The impetus is the excessive scale of gender-based violence, including the killing and rape of women and children and the ineffective court processes over the past years. This pointed to an escalation of GBV and femicide in SA. The summit is therefore considered a historical turning point as it provided the opportunity for government, civil society and social movements to work constructively towards eradicating gender based violence.

A. DEEPLY CONCERNED that:

- (1) The extent of gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa renders it a national crisis;
- (2) The rate of femicide in South Africa is reported to be, amongst the highest reported globally;
- (3) Population studies show that more than ¼ of men reported rape (27%) and data from women show between 25 and 40% experienced physical or sexual violence;
- (4) Gender-based violence, femicide and hate crimes is an affront to our common humanity as South Africans, a violation of the Constitution of South Africa and obstructs sustainable human development;
- (5) The realisation of a prosperous and vibrant democracy is deeply compromised by the effective disabling of more than half the country's population;

- (6) It affects all levels of society and women, girls, children gender non-conforming individuals, and people with disabilities are primarily the victims;
- (7) It impacts profoundly on the lives and well-being of survivors, their families, the wider community and society and reproduces itself ;
- (8) Women are not a homogenous group and are subject to intersectional vulnerabilities exacerbating the inequalities, discrimination and oppression.

B. RECOGNISING that:

- (1) The Constitution sets the overarching framework for effectively responding to and preventing gender-based violence and protecting human rights;
- (2) A range of laws and policies, programmes and interventions are in place across all sectors to address respective forms of gender-based violence and the needs of vulnerable groups;
- (3) Despite the above, implementation of these laws and policies is not effective as survivors continue to experience high levels of secondary victimization and the criminal justice system response is inadequate;
- (4) Survivors' psychosocial and related needs are not being met and often civil society organizations are bearing the brunt of providing care and response;
- (5) There is an inequitable and unstandardized resourcing approach to sheltering services across South Africa that does not meet the needs of all sectors, including people with disabilities and LGBTQIA +;
- (6) Prevention is a key element in turning the tide on gender-based violence, but has not received the necessary attention;
- (7) Images of women's objectification, men's entitlement and normative gender roles contributes to fuelling the levels of gender-based violence;
- (8) There is a lack of a cohesive, comprehensive, resourced and strategic response to gender-based violence and femicide;
- (9) There is poor accountability and the necessary resourcing to meet the extent of the crisis.

WE THEREFORE

REAFFIRM our commitment to a united, comprehensive and effective response to gender-based violence and femicide as a country;

ENDORSE the President's call to:

- (i) All South Africans to respond to gender -based violence and femicide, inclusive of the needs of people with disabilities and gender non-conforming people.
- (ii) Government and key stakeholders to establish a multi-sectoral, coordinating structure to respond to GBV and femicide; to allocate the necessary and adequate resources required and to develop a national GBV and femicide strategy.

APPRECIATE the President's pledge to listen to the women of South Africa and respond with the urgency required.

WE RESOLVE THAT:

As all delegates to work collaboratively towards the eradication of gender-based violence and femicide

AND COMMIT ourselves to the following:

- (1) Political and community leadership must support and champion the cause of eradicating gender-based violence and femicide;
- (2) Political, community, family and business leadership should be held accountable through, amongst others, a Code of Conduct;
- (3) Immediately set up an *Interim Structure, which is funded*, with the eventual objective of establishing a national, multi-stakeholder Council. The composition of the Council must be inclusive and representative with consideration of at least 51% civil society and appointments must be transparent. The interim structure should establish a functional Council within six months, the President should champion it and adequate resourcing should be in place for its optimal functioning. Subsequent legislation will govern its operations.
- (4) Adequate resourcing of Thuthuzela Care Centres, sexual offences courts and shelters that respond to the needs of all people including people with disabilities and LGBTQIA+
- (5) A National Strategic Plan (NSP) on gender -based violence and femicide is developed within the next six months. The NSP should be resourced, implemented and monitored and evaluated on a regular basis;
- (6) Ensure that all laws and policies, programmes and interventions are adequately planned, costed and resourced in line within a gender- responsive planning, budgeting and monitoring evaluation framework, across government;
- (7) Retain, resource, strengthen and reinvigorate the institutional mechanisms including the national gender machinery;
- (8) Promote woman-centred economic development;
- (9) Continuously strengthen the information and research base to develop effective, coordinated evidence- based policy and programming;
- (10) A targeted, social behaviour change programme to address patriarchal values and norms and structural drivers of gender-based violence is developed and implemented. This should be targeted at all sectors, including individuals, families, communities, civil servants, religious and traditional leaders, the private sector, the media community and others that are strategically placed to influence attitudes, behaviours and practices, supported by an effective, resourced communication strategy. These should meet the needs of those with disability.
- (11) Evaluate existing education interventions with a view to strengthen them to ensure a comprehensive response at all levels of education.
- (12) Convene a meeting of all communicators on GBV to adopt ethical guidelines, to cover language used, approaches for sensitivity (social media package) and social context training for the media sector;
- (13) Ensure service optimization through ongoing capacity building, specialization, strengthened coordination informed by legislation, norms, standards and protocols on gender-based violence;

- (14) Fast track the review of existing laws and policies on gender-based violence to be victim-centred and ensure all other relevant laws respond to GBV;
- (15) Implement the recommendations that have been identified from reviews and address legislative gaps
- (16) Consider creating a regulatory framework for religious institutions to curb sexual abuses and crimes under the guises of religion.
- (17) Revisit and fast track all outstanding laws and bills that relate to GBV and femicide, including the decriminalization of sex work