



**MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY: WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**MESSAGE OF THE MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY FOR  
WOMEN YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**MAITE NKOANA-MASHABANE**

**NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ADDRESS**

**09 AUGUST 2020**

Programme Director,

Your Excellency, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic  
of South Africa

Honourable Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture Mr. Nathi  
Mthethwa,

Honourable Premier of Mpumalanga Province, Ms Refilwe  
Mtsweni-Tsipane,

Distinguished guests

Fellow South Africans

I am pleased to join you as we celebrate National Women's Day 2020 under the theme: "***Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights for an Equal Future***".

This year, we celebrate this important day under difficult circumstances due to COVID-19. In this regard, women, youth and persons with disabilities have been hardest hit by the effects of this pandemic.

As we commemorate this important milestone, we pay tribute to the gallant women who marched to the Unions Building on 9 August 1956 in protest against pass laws. Their sacrifices laid a foundation for the progress made in empowering women and achieving gender equality.

We remember their commitment and resilience that led to the freedoms and democracy we enjoy today. There is so much we can learn from these stalwarts by following in their footsteps.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While the generation of 1956 faced different challenges under the apartheid system, the current generation is confronted with similar challenges under different circumstances. These include patriarchy, poverty, gender-based violence and more.

Despite progress made in achieving women empowerment in the last 26 years, challenges remain.

Gender-based violence and femicide continues to be a shame to our nation. Our clarion call to all South Africans is to do their part to end gender discrimination and gender-based violence and femicide.

I appeal to our communities to report cases of abuse against women and children to the police. We demand justice and harsh sentences for the perpetrators of gender-based violence and femicide.

Fellow South Africans,

We need to redouble our efforts to promote economic and financial inclusion of women in the economic mainstream of our country. We need equal pay for work value. There cannot be total emancipation of women without the full participation of women in the economy of our country. We also need to reclaim our space internationally and working together, we will achieve this

Let us rally behind our women, girls and women with disabilities to advance their rights in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. Let us also join hands and say no to patriarchy, gender-based violence and femicide and financial and economic exclusion of women.

Empowerment of women is everyone's business and needs the support of government, business, labour and civil society. Let's invest in women entrepreneurship to grow our country's economy.

We need to support the continued strengthening and further development of women's capacity in leadership, management, ownership and entrepreneurship.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let us use this year's commemoration to recommit our country to a society where boys and girls; man and women; young and elderly; and everyone is free to walk anywhere in our country.

Let us remember to regularly wash our hands or sanitise, wear masks in public and observe social distancing.

Happy Women's Day.

**Malibongwe!**