



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

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**REMARKS BY MME MAITE NKOANA-MASHABANE,  
MINISTER IN THE PRESIDENCY FOR WOMEN, YOUTH  
AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ON THE OCCASION  
OF A WEBINAR ON THE IMPACT OF ALCOHOL ON CRIME  
AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE IN  
SOUTH AFRICA**

24 August 2020

***Check against delivery***

Programme Directors, Ms Ramagoshi and Ms Githuku-Shongwe

Honourable Ministers

Honourable Members of Parliament

Director-General, Advocate Maluleke

Distinguished Panellists

Representatives of the Civil Society, Traditional Leaders, Faith-Based Organisations and Business Sector

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning and Happy Women's Month.

I am so grateful that you have joined us today to contribute to eradicating the stubborn pandemic of gender-based violence and femicide that we face on a daily basis. For us every day is an opportunity to redouble our efforts to tackle this pandemic.

As the nation fights the invisible pandemic of COVID-19, a highly visible pandemic of gender-based violence and femicide continues to ravage our women and children each day.

Statistics show that South Africa is one of the most violent places in the world and that femicide in our country is five times higher than the global average.

At the same time, it is reported that the use of alcohol in South Africa is among the highest on the African continent and the world.

The National Strategic Plan on gender-based violence and femicide (*which was approved by Cabinet early this year*) highlights a number of drivers of gender based violence and femicide. In this regard, the abuse of alcohol is one of the drivers of this pandemic.

It is against this background that we want to focus on alcohol abuse as we continue our resolve to eradicate gender-based violence and femicide.

Programme Director,

Alcohol abuse has a huge impact on users, their families and communities, resulting in a number of social, psychological and economic ills. These ills have a bearing on the family unit, health systems, education and community relations.

Moreover, alcohol abuse places an increased financial burden on the individual and the family; destabilizing the family unit and affecting the very social fabric of society.

The South African Police Services (SAPS) has previously noted that alcohol abuse is often at the heart of the so-called contact crimes. These include murder, attempted murder, sexual offenses and common assault.

In addition, the nexus between alcohol abuse and gender-based violence and femicide should not be underestimated. Indeed, alcohol abuse transcends racial, class and gender divides and affects all areas of life. This sad reality points to the fact that the problem is far-reaching and deeply entrenched.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I will not talk about statistics in relation to the link between gender-based violence and femicide and the abuse of alcohol. We have in our midst a panel of experts and thought leaders who studied this phenomenon extensively and will share with us their findings.

I will however say that I believe the entry point in dealing with gender-based violence and femicide and violence broadly is to address that which drives it, that which enables it to thrive. If alcohol abuse is one of those drivers as the National Strategic Plan has indicated, then we need to address alcohol abuse.

Therefore, this webinar is timely. We are here today to continue to find ways to break through this deeply entrenched problem that threatens the livelihood of this nation.

The webinar provides a platform to engage each other on this reality and hold hands to curb this deadly phenomenon. We want to tackle the problem head on and move towards identifying interventions that will bring an end to this and change the outlook of our nation. We hope that this will shape our society towards a situation we can all be proud of.

Distinguished Colleagues,

You will recall that during alert levels 5 and 4, our government implemented a suspension on the sales of alcohol as part of efforts to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. During that period, we witnessed a significant decrease in trauma admissions and hospital admissions related to alcohol.

We are also aware that since the lifting of the suspension of the sale of alcohol on 1 June, at least 29 women were brutally killed. In addition murder increased from 20 cases in one day to 40 on other cases in that month only.

Subsequent to the reintroduction of the suspension of the sale of alcohol sales, there have been mixed responses.

On the one hand, survivors of gender-based violence and femicide, who for a while experienced some form of safety because their partners did not have access to alcohol and were not violent. On the other hand, business people raised issues of job losses as their business depend on selling alcohol.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Now that the suspension on the sales of alcohol has been lifted again with some restrictions attached to it, we continue to be concerned about the impact this will have on violence and specifically gender- based violence and femicide.

We therefore, have invited experts today to share with us their researches and findings on the link between alcohol and gender based violence and femicide. We believe such insights will assist

as we implement the National Strategic Plan on gender-based violence and femicide.

I believe that in order to eradicate gender-based violence and femicide in our lifetime, we must implement programs that aim to change the behavior of the perpetrator.

Let's all join hands to play our part in implementing the key programs in the six pillars of the National Strategic Plan on Gender Based Violence and Femicide.

It stops with us!!!.

I thank you.