



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

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR THE MINISTER IN THE  
PRESIDENCY FOR WOMEN YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH  
DISABILITIES**

**MAITE NKOANA-MASHABANE**

**THE LAUNCH OF WOMENS MONTHS 2020**

**30 JULY 2020**

**GCIS, TSHEDIOMOSETSO HOUSE, PRETORIA**

Programme Director,

Honourable Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Members of the media

At the outset, allow me to extend our sincere condolences to the families of Seaparankwe, Ntate Andrew Mlangeni, Mbokodo Mme Zinndzi Mandela and other stalwarts of our country who recently departed us. May their souls rest in peace and rise in glory.

I am pleased to join you to officially launch Women's Month 2020. The objective of this briefing is to mark the beginning of the programme for Women's Month 2020. It is also an opportunity to Call to Action to the nation to achieve gender equality in our lifetime.

This year, we will commemorate Women's Month and Women's Day under difficult circumstances due to the difficult circumstances of the COVID-19 and national state of disaster.

Equally, our country is facing another pandemic of gender-based violence and femicide, which had continued to raise its ugly head in our society.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite the current difficult situation confronting us, we believe it is important to remain steadfast in our resolve to highlight issues facing women of our country.

This year also the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform of Action; the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security as well as the end of the African Union Decade of the African Women.

Tomorrow, 31<sup>st</sup> July is another important occasion as we mark the 58<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO).

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's launch signal the start of a national conversation and actions aimed at continuing our collective efforts to work towards the achievement of gender equality in our lifetime.

Women's Month provides an opportunity to pay tribute to the generations of women whose struggles laid the foundations for the progress made in empowering women and achieving gender equality to date.

The struggles waged by our fore bearers have resulted in important strides we have today.

In this regard, we salute the heroines of our country including but not limited to Charlotte Maxeke, Albertina Sisulu, Sophie de Bruyn, Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Helen Joseph, Rahima Moosa, Phila Ndwandwe, Dulcie September, Emma Mashinini and many others who have ushered in the rights and freedoms of women which we can lay claim to today.

Members of the Media,

We will celebrate this year's Women Month under the theme: **“Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights for an Equal Future”**. The concept of Generation Equality is a global campaign and links South Africa to global efforts to achieve gender equality by 2030.

We want to join hands across spheres of government and with all sectors of society as part of a Decade of Action towards gender equality. We also want to see sustainable programmes that are geared towards achieving this goal. Together with civil society we are establishing Action Coalitions which will work to drive visible change for women in our country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities plays an important role in the mainstreaming of gender, youth and issues affecting persons with disabilities. Our focus continues to be on inter-sectionality, because women, youth and persons with disabilities continue to face multiple forms of deprivation in our society.

It is important to recognise that women, youth and persons with disabilities have been hardest hit by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While government introduced a range of relief measures, it is critical that women's access to government social and economic relief measures is urgently addressed and that women are at the centre of government's economic recovery plan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a country we must continue to strengthen the Men's Movement so that men can play a meaningful role in ending GBVF and contribute to behaviour change and the breaking of stereotypes towards the goal of gender equality.

We should join hands across spheres of government and with all sectors of society as part of a Decade of Action towards gender equality; we want to see sustainable programmes that are geared towards achieving this goal.

Together with civil society we are establishing Action Coalitions which will work to drive visible change for women in our country.

We want to hear the voices of women in rural areas, in informal settlements, young women and girls, elderly women, women with disabilities, women workers, the LGBTQIA+ community, women in faith-based communities, women traditional leaders, women professionals and across sectors.

We will also utilise Women's Month to contribute to ending gender discrimination and gender-based violence and femicide and advance the rights of women and girls in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres of life.

It also an opportunity to mobilise women and strengthen their organized formations towards the development of sustainable Action Coalitions, which are collectives of change makers of all

ages and genders to tackle the unfinished business of empowering women.

We will continue to develop national consensus around gender policy priorities and programmes to advance the gender agenda by 2025 and by 2030.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our call to action to the nation today is: ***Be a part of the generation that ends gender inequality.***

I am calling upon change makers of all ages and genders to tackle the unfinished business of empowering women. We can achieve this through a multi-generational campaign, under the slogan: “Be a part of the generation that ends gender inequality”.

We have to strive to dismantle patriarchy in all its forms as an underlying cause of many of the injustices women face on a daily basis.

We want to see every day thousands of women, organisations,

formations, collectives, businesses, major companies and international development partners responding to gender inequality through programmes and projects, interventions, campaigns and mobilisation.

On your part, we would like the members of the media to utilise your platform including on social media to share what you are doing because you are the change agents who will bring about this change. We believe that your work will also inspire others to take on similar projects within their own spaces.

As we confront the second pandemic of gender-based violence and femicide, we must agree that the fight is bigger than government and require collective societal commitment.

We will utilise the Women's Month to accelerate the implementation of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF in partnership with civil society.

We call upon our communities to join and help us eradicate this pandemic. We further appeal to families and communities to come together against this scourge to expose perpetrators and

not turn a blind eye. Anyone who harms someone else must face the full might of the law.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to inform you that this year's National Women's Day Event on 9th August 2020 will be virtually celebrated.

It will include participation of various stakeholders including stalwarts of our liberation, keynote address by the President of the Republic and other cultural activities.

In conclusion, as the country continues to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, we would like to encourage everyone in our country to wear their masks, sanitise regularly and wash their hands with soap and do their part to observe social distancing. Together we must overcome this pandemic.

Malibongwe !