



Commission for Gender Equality
A society free from gender oppression and inequality

Media Release

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To: Editors, Producers and Reporters

Gender Commission Calls for Combating of Hate Crimes

In line with the constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) respects freedom of choice and association. Just like any other citizen, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans/transgender, Intersex, Queer/questioning, and Asexual (LGBTIQA+) have a right to life and their sexual orientation should not be the reason for them to be killed. The recent killings of queer people have brought back the spotlight to the dangers of constant fear LGBTIQA+) constantly face in South Africa. The Gender Commission is aware of the three Bills on trying to eradicate the scourge of gender-based violence (GBV) before Parliament and have given its input hoping their adoption will go along in ensuring that issues like hate crimes do not happen anymore.

The Gender Commission is also cognizant of the fact that adoption of the 3 bills on GBV before Parliament only cannot eradicate hate crime and GBV, however a clear implementation strategy is needed. This will ensure that all role players are sensitized and are able to take action in preventing occurrence of hate crimes. We also need a mechanism to build a clear conscientisation and awareness raising around issues of hate crimes. Others commit these crimes due to the lack of knowledge in the process and in turn directly infringing on the rights of others.

The recent deaths of Queer people should be a lesson to all who are spiteful to other's sexual and gender identity and to rise above their stereotyping and be accommodative. "The CGE condemns hate crimes against lesbians and gays as this is not only out of line with the Constitution, but actually robs them of their dignity and rights. The society should begin to embrace gays, lesbians and all gender non-conforming individuals as part of a broader society and not to infringe on their rights as it seems to be the norm presently", said Ms Tamara Mathebula, Chairperson of the Commission for Gender Equality.



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Gays and Lesbians have a right to be, and this applies to the intersexed, bisexual as well as transgendered people. The CGE will join hands with other relevant stakeholders in order to fight the continued violation of Gays and Lesbians rights and freedoms. The CGE will not hesitate to use its legal powers in pursuit of social justice protection for these vulnerable groups. We invite all South Africans to join us in our endeavour to raise awareness around issues and rights of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transgendered and Intersexed, and Queer LGBTIQ+ people as these acts continue to impact negatively on our country that is considered to be having one of the most progressive Constitution in the world that is protective of all rights.

People can use the CGE Toll -Free Number 0800 007 709 or visit the website at www.cge.org.za to lodge gender related complaints.

ENDS,

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The Commission for Gender Equality is established in terms of Section 181 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa to promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development, and attainment of gender equality.

Twitter Handle: @CGE_ZA. Facebook Page: Gender Commission of South Africa. Toll Free Number: 0800 007 709. GBV Toll Free Number: 0800 428 428, Stop Gender Violence: 0800 150 150 Witness, Survivors and victims of GBV can send Please Call Me at *120*7867#