



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

Media Release

14 August 2021

To: Editors, Producers and Reporters

CGE CALLS FOR OPENING OF THE 32 DESIGNATED SEXUAL OFFENCES COURTS TO SPEED-UP GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PROSECUTIONS

The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) has noted the arrest of a man following the murder of a Cape Town woman whose body was found dumped in Phillipi on Women's Day. While this arrest is welcome, the Commission is calling on government to speed up the opening of designated Sexual Offences Courts across the country, to effectively and speedily prosecute crimes against women. On June 10, the Commission welcomed President Cyril Ramaphosa's announcement in his response to questions in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), that 32 regional courts were ready to be designated as Sexual Offences Courts. This move would open the much-needed access to justice for women and girls who continue to suffer onslaught under the gender-based violence (GBV) pandemic in South Africa.

There are warning signs that our country's response to gender-based violence is falling short, and this is of great concern to the Commission, which has been mandated by the Constitution of the country, to monitor equal enforcement of gender-based laws for the protection of all citizens, amongst other responsibilities. "It was also in the month of August that another Cape Town woman, Uyinene Mrwetyana, was brutally murdered by a man inside a Post Office in 2019. The perpetrators of GBV are loudly making a mockery of government's and society's efforts to stop the GBV scourge, and openly undermining the very essence of women's month," said chairperson of the Commission, Ms. Tamara Mathebula.

The Commission also calls for government to open the additional six Thuthuzela Care Centres to provide safety and shelter for women who want to escape threats and cycles of abuse in their families and communities. This commitment was also announced by the President in his responses in the NCOP. "We are also calling on the National Council of Provinces to speedily process two Bills that are critical in



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

fightening the country's laws against perpetrators of GBV, the Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Bill and Domestic Violence Amendment Bill, that were passed by the National Assembly," Ms. Mathebula added.

The Commission would like to issue a public call to women who are not finding satisfaction in their efforts to get justice against GBV perpetrators, to call our toll free no 0800 007 709 to lodge complaints with our legal officers. Alternatively, victims and survivors can send a Please Call message to *120*7867#. This call is also extended to all other people who are being abused or discriminated against based on their gender or sexual orientation.

Issued by Commission for Gender Equality

Contact Person: Javu Baloyi (Spokesperson)

Cell: 083 579 3306



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.

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#