

# 'End violence against women'

## STATE OF PROVINCE ADDRESS: Premier Mokonyane tells legislature

VIOLENCE against women and children must be eradicated, Gauteng Premier Nomvula Mokonyane said in her State of the Province address in Johannesburg yesterday.

"The eradication of violence against women and children is a central pillar of our social crime prevention efforts in the province," she said. The issue of sexual offences and gender-based violence has risen to the fore in the media and public discourse.

She referred to the deaths of Anene Booysen and Reeva Steenkamp, and to the gang-rape of a 17-year-old girl by 15 men in Khutson, near Carletonville, on Friday.

"We invite men and women to engage on this matter so that we can find a sustainable societal intervention programme to make Gauteng and our country a safer place for girl children and women."

Mokonyane said the solution lay

in socially-embedded solutions, as sexual offences were fundamentally a social problem.

The province would provide increased forensic support to the family violence, child abuse and sexual offences units, added support for victims and families, and would strengthen the management and use of the sexual offences register.

Serious crimes had decreased in the province by 8.1%, with murders down by 11% and attempted murders by 16.3%.

Mokonyane said: "Despite the adverse global economic conditions, unemployment in Gauteng has decreased from 28.2% in the first quarter of 2011 to 23.7% in the fourth quarter of 2012 financial year."

Gauteng had created 22 000 permanent jobs, 44 000 temporary jobs and 151 000 people had been employed through the expanded public works programme (EPWP).

She said 5 421 government vacancies had been filled by the end of January. "In 2013/14 we intend to create 196 000 EPWP work opportunities at both provincial and municipal levels. In addition, 51 000 temporary and permanent jobs will be created."

She acknowledged that the public health sector had been in an "unsatisfactory state", and blamed outsourcing and poor resources management. "We were plagued by instances of maladministration, corruption and blatant disregard for authority and rules that govern our public health institutions."

The province had implemented a turnaround strategy, which had paid particular attention to the Chris Hani-Baragwanath, Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic, Dr George Mukhari and Steve Biko hospitals. "Infrastructure maintenance and provisioning of electro-mechanical equipment, integral to

the effective functioning of our hospitals, has improved," she said.

Pharmacy hours had been extended and medicine distribution improved. The province aimed to improve the availability of essential medicines from 78 to 98%.

Of Gauteng's estimated 1.2 million HIV positive residents, nearly 900 000 now had access to antiretroviral treatment. Emergency services would also be strengthened, with an additional 100 ambulances.

Mokonyane said R13 billion had been committed to infrastructure development for the next three years, as it was essential to ensure the province reached its potential.

Eskom would spend R74bn in the next five years to ensure the safety of Gauteng's electricity supply.

Addressing growing litigation against the province, Mokonyane said a plan was in place to ensure effective case management, to settle legitimate cases quickly. — Sapa.