

■ GANG VIOLENCE

Moms march to Parliament for justice

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HUNDREDS of mothers who lost children in the ongoing gang violence in the Cape Flats marched to Parliament, under the Moms Move for Justice (MMJ) banner, demanding justice for their loved ones.

They were joined by child rights activists and former Cape Town mayor and current Public Works Minister Patricia de Lille.

According to the Department of Social Development, in the province between April 1, 2013 and March 31 last year, more than 781 children between the ages of 13 and 17 were killed, 76 between the ages of six and 12 and 128 between the ages of zero and five.

The group handed over a petition to Department of Justice (DOJ) officials.

Chairperson for the Manenberg Safety Forum Roegshanda Pascoe said: "Our children are truly being traumatised. They are living within broken families and then find comfort in the wrong places such as gangs.

"Young teenage pregnancies and prostitution are occurring because these individuals are not receiving the love they need at home."

Pascoe said the mothers of children who were gangsters are not to be judged and the MMJ march was about supporting women who lost their chil-



MOTHERS want officials to take a stronger stance against gang violence. | ARMAND HOUGH African News Agency (ANA)

dren as a result of gang violence.

About 300 mothers were present at the march and some of them brought with them clothing of their lost children to honour the innocent lives lost.

A few requests made to the provincial leadership in the DOJ was for mothers to receive more feedback on cases, receive proper explanations of court proceedings, no bail for pepe-

trators of brutal crimes such as murder and rape, more convictions to be made and families to be treated with more respect when engaging with officials.

MMJ member, Lesley Wyngaard, whose son was murdered in gang crossfire in 2015, said: "Perpetrators are committing brutal crimes and often the justice system favours them because their human rights are taken

into consideration.

"Bail is being given too easily to someone who murdered and raped innocent children and babies."

She alleged some officials were working with the gangsters.

Founder of Honouring All Angels Latifah Jacobs said officials needed to turn their meetings into something more productive.