



**public works  
& infrastructure**

Department:  
Public Works and Infrastructure  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Minister of Social Development, Lindiwe Zulu**

**Deputy Minister for Women Youth & Persons with Disabilities, Professor  
Hlengiwe Mkhize,**

**Councillor, Fortunate Mampuru**

**Councillors**

**Director General of Public Works and Infrastructure: Advocate Sam Vukela**

**Programme Director: Reverend Naledi Stemela – Chief Director of Gender Unit  
in DPWI**

**Pastor Mukhethwa Mulaudzi**

**Representatives from various departments**

**Members of the media**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Good morning, goeie more, molweni, Dumelang, Ashee, as-salaamu  
ailakum, shalom, Namaste**

- 1. Thank you all for being here today for a very important day.**
- 2. I want to start by acknowledging the community. GBV is very high in  
this community and by changing this centre from children's centre to a**

**centre for women and children, we want to save the lives of women because they are our mothers and sisters and I am sure you will agree with me.**

- 3. We need your help as the community to make this centre a success and we need your help to give advice on what programmes will work best at the centre.**
- 4. Today we are demonstrating to the citizens of South Africa that this government is serious about tackling gender-based violence and providing safe spaces of women and children who are being abused.**
- 5. I have said before that as a country we should hang our heads in shame for the utter disgrace that is gender-based violence.**
- 6. It is a scourge and it is despicable how our women, our mothers, sisters and children are not only being harmed but brutally killed by men who should be loving our women and love is not pain.**
- 7. Our women and children are under attack and South Africa is bleeding.**
- 8. We have debated it long enough and South Africans are sick and tired.**
- 9. We have to build a South Africa where women feel safe, safe in their homes, safe at work, in schools, safe in the university dorms, safe at post offices, safe everywhere.**

- 10. Government has enough plans, we have policies, we have a good constitution, we have good laws and the time has come to enforce those laws strongly and to design programme of action like we are doing now.**
  
- 11. The time has come to act as that is what we are here to do today, to show that as the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) we are delivering on the commitment I made in Parliament on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2019.**
  
- 12. On that same day, I also made a call on all political leaders who criss-crossed the country looking for votes to revisit all those communities with a strong anti-gender based violence messages and to do whatever they could in their capacity to fight GBV.**
  
- 13. The Department has drawn up an Action Plan and has committed to, amongst other things:**
  
- 14. Run campaigns and using public spaces and government buildings to erect billboards with GBV awareness messages and help lines so that these messages could be in the faces of the monsters who perpetrate these crimes and that women can see where they can get help.**
  
- 15. DPWI also committed to starting a process of identifying unused and underutilised buildings and making them available for shelters and safe houses to victims of gender based violence.**

- 16. Today we are delivering on that commitment and our mandate to provide accommodation for service delivery by government departments and in this case specifically for shelters for victims of gender-based violence.**
- 17. Ladies and gentlemen, I am serious about this crisis, we cannot be lacklustre in our delivery, people are crying out for help, women are dying.**
- 18. The more we wait, the more we delay, the more women are exposed and possibly face the fate of being added as another name to that dreadful list.**
- 19. This is why today, DPWI is handing over this new building here in Salvokop to the Department of Social Development and the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities to use as a shelter for abused women and children.**
- 20. As DPWI, we are responsible for government accommodation and infrastructure and we are handing over the infrastructure but what goes on inside the building, the programmes that will be run here must be designed and implemented by Minister Zulu and Minister Mashabane's departments.**
- 21. The safety of women in the centre must be the responsibility of social development and the police to protect these women and children and we also call on the community to help us guard this centre.**

- 22. We must remember that many women are mothers and often they have to flee an abusive relationship with their children to ensure that they can protect their children from the abuser.**
- 23. We must also be remember that children too are abused on a daily basis, children too have been raped and killed.**
- 24. Here is a centre for women and children where they can be kept safe from abuse and safe from being killed because one life lost is one too many.**
- 25. This centre has this general hall area, a small playground area, kitchen, office space, several bathrooms with showers and baths all beautifully fitted and numerous bedrooms.**
- 26. In total it can accommodate around 60 people and today we are handing it over to the Minister of Social Development who can bring in the programmes and the resources to make this a safe haven for abuse victims.**
- 27. This is not just a building. What we are doing here today is giving people a choice and possibly a lifeline.**
- 28. Often women stay in abusive relationships and end up getting killed because they have nowhere to go.**
- 29. To the Minister of Social Development and the Deputy Minister of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, I am making a commitment today again that DPWI will make properties available for**

**you to provide a safe space so that no more women and children will be killed because they had nowhere to go.**

**30. DPWI made commitments to the Emergency Response Action Plan which is being monitored by the Presidential Gender-based Violence and Femicide Interim Steering Committee.**

**31. DPWI has committed to make at least 11 buildings available for shelters and interim housing arrangements for survivors of Gender Based Violence and Femicide by 31 March 2020.**

**32. DPWI has also committed to making at least 3 additional shelters available that accommodate and integrate LGBTIQ+ community and persons with disabilities into existing shelters.**

**33. DPWI will also use public buildings to do prevention and awareness messaging in partnership with the private sector.**

**34. DPWI also intends to recruit 308 EPWP workers, 7 for each of the 44 Districts. EPWP workers will work with NGO'S in the GBV and Femicide space but the Ministers of Social Development and of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities must take responsibility for these programmes.**

**35. This Salvokop centre will also be in the midst of a huge flagship development which will be done through investment from government and private sector partners and DPWI will come back to consult with the community.**

**36. In addition to this property, DPWI is also finalising clean-up activities at three houses here in Pretoria also to be handed to Social Development for shelters.**

**37. In total these 3 houses have 10 bedrooms so it can be a safe space for a number of women or children seeking protection.**

**38. As DPWI, we are moving full steam to make properties available for GBV victims and in the coming months, our teams and I will be visiting more areas across the country to hand over even more properties to be used as shelters.**

**39. This is not the time to wait and delay and carry on with the business as usual way of doing things.**

**40. Too many women have died, too many children have had their lives cut short through their heinous crimes and as I said this is not about buildings, it is about saving lives now.**

**41. Today, the members of the media also saw that we unveiled our first GBV billboard and the message on there is directed at men with a helpline which victims can call for help.**

**42. The Department of Social Development's GBV Command Centre number is 0800 428 428 which is available 24 hours a day and the other dedicated gender violence number is 0800 150 150.**

**43. I called the Social Development GBV command centre last Saturday and Minister Zulu, I must commend your team because the call was answered in a few seconds and there was a team of social workers and counsellors ready to help.**

**44. I didn't tell the counsellor who I was and was very impressed with their manner on the phone.**

**45. We must distribute these numbers far and wide so that women can know there is help for them out there.**

**46. These numbers will be on all the billboards and banners that we will also be unveiling across the country in the coming months.**

**47. We are going to cover the length and breadth of this country because this is a scourge that is taking place in every corner of this country and this government must show the women and children of South Africa that we care and will give the help they need.**



**48. But beyond that, the nature of this crisis calls for all of us as South Africans to play a role, if we are going to put an end to gender based violence, every sector in society must do their part.**

**49. From the big corporates, the universities, the various government departments, civil society organisations and schools: we must all have anti-GBV programmes in place and increase our measures in every location of this country so that women feel safe.**

**50. So to everyone who can do something, please do something, government cannot do it alone and let's do it now.**

**51. We must tackle this as an army because if we don't, history will judge us and ask: "Why didn't they act?"**

**52. DPWI is committed and we will press forward with every effort to help women and children feel safe.**

**53. In closing, I want to reiterate my message to women that I shared in Parliament earlier this week.**

**54. Women: please realise that pain is not normal, pain is not love.**

**55. I urge those who are suffering to walk away from abusive relationships, empower yourself, stop feeling ashamed or scared and go to a place where you can get help before it's too late.**

**56. Thank you all for being here today, enkosi, baie dankie and may God bless you all and keep our women and children safe. ((ENDS))**