

**MEC's Speech: 16 Days of Activism for NO
violence against Women and Children**

25 Nov 2012 ~ Katjibane

Allocated: 30 Minutes

Programme Director,
Executive District Mayor, Cllr. S Mashilo
Executive Mayor of Dr. JS Moroka Local
Municipality, Cllr. GT Mthimunye
Provincial Commissioner, Lt. General TR Ntobela
Head of the Department, Mr. Thulani Sibuyi
Provincial Chairperson of CPF Board, Mr. Cavin
Pillay
Representatives from the House of Traditional
Leaders
Representatives of SACC: Pastor. HJ Kalonda
All women formations present here
Leadership of the Police Service and the
Department of Community safety, Security &
liaison
Invited Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Program director,

Kungani kufanele sifundise abantu ukuthi kufanele baphile kanjani na?

Yini omunye umuntu angakwazi ukuhlonipha omunye umuntu na?

Yini ebangela ikakhulukazi umuntu wesilisa ukuthi angahloniphi amalungelo omuntu owesifazane kanye nabantwana na?

Program director, Today We join millions of people across the world to mark the 16th Day of Activism for NO violence against women and children. During this time, the South African Government runs a 16 Days of Activism Campaign to make people aware of the negative impact of violence on women and children and to act against abuse. We are firmly committed to lead a coordinated effort to sustain the campaign into its next decade.

Every year, government, civil-society organizations and the business sector work

together to broaden the impact of the campaign. By supporting this campaign, thousands of South Africans have also helped to increase awareness of abuse and build support for victims and survivors of abuse.

There was a time wherein people mobilized themselves and converged to fight state oppression and exploitation which was prevalent in the 1950's and was totally rejected. The people were actively involved in formulating their own vision of an alternative society. Why can't we go back and say these words they said I quote "*THESE FREEDOMS WE WILL FIGHT FOR, SIDE BY SIDE, THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES, UNTIL WE HAVE WON OUR LIBERTY.*" These words are still relevant today; these words were used during the development of our freedom charter. Why can't we appreciate one another, love one another, support one another and protect one another.

Why are we moving away from such societal practices , we now becoming animals instead of real human beings. A normal being would respect, support and protect the other. Why we have to rape our little girls and molest our little boys?.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I once read a newspaper wherein a few months old baby was raped and killed by her own uncle. Why we have to abuse our grandmothers?, our own wives, sisters and younger girls. We should be husbands to our wives, fathers to our children, brothers to our siblings and uncles to our extended families.

Program Director, This year's 16 Days Campaign provides an opportunity to reflect on what women's rights activists can do to hold our governments to account and challenge the structures that allow gender-based violence to continue. As always, Participation in this Campaign not only provides an opportunity for

us to advocate against, and raise awareness about, gender-based violence, it also allows us to add our voices to those of women in other countries and regions who refuse to be silent. Gender-based violence is an issue that impacts all of us at multiple levels. Within this context our governments have a responsibility to respond, protect, and prevent.

Program Director it is vital that I also highlight that Gender-based violence takes place throughout the life cycle and can be grouped into few categories such as sexual violence – e.g. sexual harassment, incest, rape, forced, prostitution and sexual slavery, physical violence – e.g. wife battering and assault, ‘honour’ killings, female infanticide, child assault by teachers and gay bashing; emotional and psychological violence such as threats of violence, insults and name calling, humiliation in front of others, blackmail and the threat of abandonment; harmful traditional practices – such as female genital mutilation , denial of certain foods and forced and/or early

marriage; socio-economic violence such as discriminatory access to basic health care, low levels of literacy and educational attainment, inadequate shelter and food, economic deprivation, armed conflict and acts of terrorism. The most widespread form of gender-based violence is physical abuse of a woman by an intimate male partner, current and former spouse, cohabitating partner, date or boyfriend. Thirty five studies from a wide variety of countries show that one quarter to more than half of women report having been physically abused by a present or former partner.

The authors of a report on domestic violence and mental health across cultures comment that documented behaviours experienced by women ranged from being slapped, punched, pushed, kicked, cut, burned, choked, threatened with a weapon (knife, gun, machete, household instrument, and the like), being flung from or run over by a vehicle, to being murdered.

Some men are addicted to violence, domestic violence is crime. As much as we may understand that often violence may be caused by various factors but the fact remain that these evil acts must stop, full stop. Section 10. , under the bill of rights in the constitution of Republic of South Africa No 108 of 1996 explicitly states on Human dignity that I quote *“Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected”* close quote

There are number of aggressive type of behavior such as shouting, hitting, bullying, demanding, putting people down, swearing, telling people what to do, throwing things, showing off, bad moods, butting in, bossy, ignoring, intimidating and this is the way that domestically violent people behave most of the time and these kinds of behavior is abusive in nature.

This **Aggressive** behavior starts at home that is why the theme says *“From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let’s Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women and children!”* .

This immoral behavior starts from an early stage where in most families young girls are just treated like general factotums and boys are treated very different from girls. Parental guidance is required for both parents. We need to instill sense of belonging, of love, support and protection from an early age because this has a bearing on the behavior we see today. Our education system should also improve on such issues and civil society organizations shall work closely with Traditional leaders in exorcising this immoral acts.

Programme Director, let me remind our people that we have community structures in our localities the CPF’s, these forums strengthen and maintain a sound partnership between the community and the police.

It also promotes co-operation between SAPS and the community with the view of fulfilling the needs of the community regarding police matters. I therefore request everyone to use these structures on any matters affecting them and we encourage our people to report these matters in their own local police stations . We shall continue to support those reported cases of sexual harassment including in the work place.

We have said it many a times that women's work is not only in the kitchen, Men should realize that time has changed for better and for equal opportunities. We need not to be conservative on these matters, We are striving as Government that gender mainstreaming exist in all aspects including higher positions in government. Women have displayed good attributes and dexterities in many forms , thus we encourage those who are still fearing that higher positions are made for only men.

Women should take courage and do what is best for them. It is important that we do not just talk about women empowerment because it is fashionable to do so.

We must continuously measure the progress we are making in this regard so that we can determine what we should do next to improve on our performance . Accordingly, it will be necessary to make an audit of this progress in both the public and private sectors.

Men should change and open up about these dark acts of their lives, they must join other structures such as Men for Change these men are challenged to plan for change in their own communities, homes, workplaces and families. With in-depth training-of trainers and focused gender workshops, the men are given tools to change the environment, and challenge ingrained stereotypes about men, and their roles. Another organization called Brothers For Life and their motto is Yenza Kahle “Do the right thing” such organization are contributive to the problems affecting women and children

as aforesaid. I recently read an article in a magazine wherein one prominent Actor took a courage and stand out publicly to say I was an abuser, and I have changed, reminding everyone that it begins with you, you must change and laying your hands on your wife is completely immoral, it is unacceptable. Men should be reformed.

As Mpumalanga sector departments we have already started the involvement of men and women on many topical issues affecting them especially issues of violence and abuse. Series of activities have been planned during this period to educate our people primarily young and old to instill good practices.

Community dialogues could be a viable tool in addressing such issues, support groups and other structures where men can gather together and deal with issues affecting them including their women and their children. Men should learn to start talking about issues affecting them when they are sober not when they are drunk.

Men should learn to deal with family issues when they are sober not when they are drunk. Men should look at their wives as partners not as African beating drums. Men should be aware that time has come to change, to change for a better, to change for being responsible men, to be respected in their own families and communities by providing security amongst their own people.

One writer in his article mentioned few Qualities a woman looks for in a man, **Honesty** When I say honest I mean being honest about everything. **To be able to protect** – According to the women I have spoken with they want to know their partner will be able to protect them physically in times of danger or trouble. That's not to say women are weak it's a security thing and knowing that their partner is capable or willing to protect them at all costs gives women a little more peace of mind.

Get up and go – Women don't like men who have no motivation to do anything with their lives.

They want a man who has passion and has goals in life and has got the motivation to follow their dreams.

Commitment –If you are not committed then there will always be that little doubt in the back of her mind asking if you are really serious about the relationship. **Respect** –It’s not only respect for her but it’s respect for yourself as well.

As We are approaching the World Aids Day on the 1st of December . Our President Jacob Zuma during the World Aids Day in 2009 once said I quote *“HIV & AIDS cannot be overcome simply by improving the quality of drinking water or eradicating mosquitoes or mass immunization it can only be overcome by individuals taking responsibility for their own lives and the lives of those around them”* close quote.

It is about all of us cohesively taking full responsibility for our own lives and those around us. Lets eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against women and children

I thank you all