



**REMARKS BY NORTH WEST PREMIER, HONOURABLE KAOBITSA BUSHY MAAPE ON THE OCCASION OF THE PROVINCIAL CLOSURE OF 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN, TLOKWENG, MOSES KOTANE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, 10 DECEMBER 2021**

Programme Director,

Members of the Executive Council present here today

Executive Mayor of Bojanala District Municipality

The Mayor of Moses Kotane Local Municipality

Non-governmental Organisations & Advocacy Groups against Women and Children Abuse

House of Traditional Leaders

Leaders of Faith Based Organisations

Distinguished guests

Bagaetsho Dumelang,

The year 2021 marks the 30th anniversary of the Global 16 Days of Activism Campaign against Women & Child abuse. This year the 16 Days of Activism Campaign is centred on fighting the scourge of gender-based violence and the killing of women and children.

The purpose of the 16 Days Campaign is to escalate social mobilization and action coalitions against GBV. These interventions are of vital importance particularly in creating socio-economic opportunities for women to be independent and self-sufficient.

The campaign also represents the high-point of the 365 days campaign and a period of intensified activity in fighting this scourge. This also includes the sustained mass media and Behavior Change Campaigns.

The theme for the 16 Days Activism Campaign for 2021 is:

**“The Year of Charlotte Mannya Maxeke: 16 Days of Activism – Moving from Awareness to Accountability”**

The emphasis is to strengthen partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders, through accountability, coordination and leadership. This requires involving all South Africans, including government, the private sector, work places, education and training institutions, Civil Society as well as cultural institutions to account for their role in building a safe and Gender Based Violence free society.

The provincial government deemed it fit to host this event here as the area has been flagged by the South African Police Service as a hotspot in terms of cases of gender-based violence and the abuse meted out on women and children.

At the start of this campaign, I had an opportunity to visit the KOSH Crisis Centre in Klerksdorp in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District and I am encouraged by the work that has been carried out by women and men in fighting this scourge. Since the beginning of this year the Centre has assisted more than one thousand (1 000) victims. This is a step in the right direction. The role of Non-profit and non-governmental organisations must be strengthened particularly in the areas of advocacy and community liaison. The work of NGOs and Advocacy groups in the fight against gender-based violence must be supported.

In October this year the house of traditional leaders launched the Traditional Men's Parliament. This is a joint effort between the North West House of Traditional Leaders, Takuwani Riime Men's Movement, the Department of Social Development and the Provincial Council on Aids.

The primary objective of this initiative is to develop and coordinate the "Men Championing Change" programme to reach men and boys formations across the country. This includes building strategic partnerships with various stakeholders in dealing with the scourge of gender-based violence. Other key priority areas include social cohesion, fighting crime as well as substance and alcohol abuse.

The role of men in many of the social ills engulfing our communities has come under sharp scrutiny in the recent past. Men must come forward and be part of the solution in the fight against gender-based violence. I am encouraged by this initiative which seeks to mobilise men from all corners of the province to work hand in glove with government in fighting this scourge.

COVID-19 has presented us with a new set of challenges which call for individual and collective solutions. Let's continue our efforts all year round from 16 to 365 days of activism, to advance the rights of women. A world without violence is possible and this moment demands unparalleled courage and joint action to make this vision a reality.

The 16 Days Activism Campaign continues to generate a heightened level of awareness amongst South Africans on the deleterious effect and

impact of gender-based violence and femicide on our society. Over the past two decades, all partners, especially government, working with civil society, have been making concerted efforts in raising awareness about the 16 Days of Activism campaign within a broader approach of 365 days of action to address gender-based violence and femicide in the country.

The country has been subjected to horrendous incidents of Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) and continues to experience high levels of GBVF. The 2019/20 crime statistics indicated an increase in reported rape and sexual assault cases compared to 2018/19. This situation is further exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19 on the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

This deadly virus which has decimated industries has left a trail of destruction. Millions of people have lost their jobs and children have been orphaned by this pandemic. As we seek to find lasting solutions to the scourge of gender-based violence besieging our communities we must also devise strategies on how we are going to deal with the impact of Covid-19 in our communities.

Over 1.6 million vaccines have been administered in the province. This translates into forty percent of people who have been inoculated with the Covid-19 vaccine. We need to reach population immunity so that our lives can go back to normal. But critically we need to resuscitate the economy so that we can be able to address the challenges of poverty and unemployment gripping our communities.

There have been a lot of falsehoods peddled about Covid-19 and vaccines. The youth have fallen victim to these lies. I would like to appeal to the youth to familiarise themselves with proper information so that they don't get hoodwinked into believing conspiracies about vaccines.

Let's all work together in building safer communities for women and children.

I thank you!