



Speech by Director General of Mineral Resources and Energy, Adv. Thabo Mokoena during the Women in Mining Forum and 16 Days of Activism for no Violence Against Women and Children: 27 November 2020: Misty Hills Country Hotel Conference Centre, Johannesburg, Gauteng (delivered by Mr Zizamele Mbambo, DDG Nuclear)

Programme Directors, Mr Lucas Masufi and Ms Gao Sebegu

Hon Minister of Mineral Resource and Energy, Mr Samson Gwede Mantashe in absentia

Director General, Adv Thabo Mokoena in absentia

Chief Inspector, DDG: Mr David Msiza in absentia

Representatives from different Mining Companies and Councils

Representatives from DMRE

Representatives from Women in Mining

Representatives from Men in Mining

Representatives from Organised Labour

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning,

Thank you for allowing me to be with you and be part of this special event as we commemorate 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children. It is great to see people from Government, Private sector, activists, men and women working together and speaking in one voice on

the need to eliminate gender-based violence. This crisis of violence against women and children is a great shame to our nation.

Covid-19 is still active in our midst and we are living under Covid-19 regulations and restrictions; it is indeed our new normal, let's adjust and acclimatize to this unavoidable change. The COVID-19 pandemic is causing untold human suffering and is heightening gender-based inequalities not only in South Africa but also around the world. The ongoing attacks on women and children have led to HE President Cyril Ramaphosa declaring Gender Based Violence and femicide (GBVF) as a second pandemic following the Covid-19.

Gender-based violence, whether physical, sexual, emotional or economic, is recognised globally as one of the most widespread and persistent violations of the rights of women and girls. It is a universal problem; it cuts across geography, class and culture.

Today, more than twenty four years after the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, one in three women experience physical or sexual violence. This is unacceptable and reminds us of the need to redouble our efforts.

Government has been making strides in combating violence against women and children. We have seen an increase in the number of perpetrators who are serving life sentences for committing such violence. Cabinet has endorsed the National Strategic Plan on Gender Based Violence and Femicide, which every sector, organization and community must implement to fight this pandemic. The plan provides a cohesive strategic framework to guide the national response to this scourge and calls for Public Private Partnership.

The introduction and approval of the National Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing Strategic Framework by

government, which the sector is expected to implement gives guidance on how men and women can both be economically empowered.

We acknowledge and appreciate that mining companies have different policies, programmes and systems in place to address, inequality, sexual harassment and violence in the workplace.

The increase in female participation has been made to the extent that women now comprise a growing percentage of the industry's entire labour force. However, the increase in female participation has not necessarily translated to a significant improvement in the behaviour and attitude towards female miners. In fact, abuse, harassment and intimidation by male colleagues remains a challenge that many women confront on a daily basis, at work as well as at home.

It is clear that the fight against poverty and injustice will only bear fruit if we address the root causes of gender inequalities and GBV in our workplace, families, societies and nations. I am today saying that it is the responsibility of everyone working in mining, regardless of whether you are a male or female to protect women and children in our society. Let us hold hands as mining employees to fight this scourge that is destroying our nation, together we can do it.

As a key economic sector, we must take care of our surrounding mining community and empower women economically. Women need to be part of the entire mining and minerals value chain. This is one of the solutions that we must implement to solve the challenge of financial insecurity many women face, which in turn leads to gender-based violence.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe it is appropriate to conclude by saying let us join hands in eliminating violence against women and children.

As we commemorate and mourn the victims of the two pandemics, let us not forget to adhere to Covid-19 regulations. Our greatest challenge now

and our most important task is to ensure that we do not experience a new surge in infections.

Thank you