



**MINISTRY OF POLICE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**REMARKS BY MINISTER FIKILE MBALULA ON THE  
UNVEILING OF THE POLICY ON REDUCING BARRIERS TO  
THE REPORTING OF SEXUAL OFFENSES AND DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE – ELDORADOPARK – 11 AUGUST 2017**

Today we are publishing the Policy on Reducing Barriers to the Reporting of Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence.

This is a significant milestone in Government's efforts to bring to an end this on-going scourge against South Africa's most vulnerable citizens.

This policy provides the South African Police Service with important instructions on how to behave, what to do, how to do it on issues of sexual offences and domestic violence, and for enhancing the delivery of high quality services to communities.

The Policy will also give communities and our vulnerable groups understanding of their rights and expectations.

We are duty bound to ensure that all South Africans feel safe, at home, school, work, or in their communities.

In the policy there are a host of interventions to prevent and deter crime, as well as respond appropriately and compassionately to victims of violence.

This policy says we at SAPS have a role to play. We have a critical role in creating safer communities and provide a platform for communities.

When we get to understand these cases, what became clear to me is that in almost all of the ones that end in tragic end, violence had been occurring without being reported or reported but withdrawn after the couple cools off.

This means we have more criminals outside of the system than inside the system. We have a lot of potential victims of murder, rape and domestic violence amongst us. These are our friends and family.

We must reduce the gap between reported and unreported incidents of sexual offences and domestic violence; this will be a boost to efforts to prevent such violence. Let us reduce barriers to reporting these crimes.

The focus for public awareness will be the 6 Point Plan extracted from the Policy. The 6 Point Plan will be a concise guide to both our Police and Communities. We are putting our people first.

We are confirming their dignity and human rights. We are frankly saying, in us, in your government you have a reliable group of people committed to making your life better.

Our past that a man had power over his wife; including the complete control over her property and of her daily affairs is history. **WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE NOT MALE PROPERTY, FULL STOP!**

The resolute efforts in developing this policy are sincerely for every victim of a sexual offence or domestic violence, who was left dissatisfied with the manner in which a member of our police service dealt with their case.

One victim of such crimes is one too many. The time has come for all members of SAPS to re-instill a sense of commitment to the vulnerable in our communities. **We have no time to waste time!**

We trust that this policy will be an important resource for SAPS and communities alike as we take up the challenge of building safer communities.

I will now read the 6 Point Plan, which are an instruction to our police officers and a commitment to our people:

1. All victims should be treated with respect, dignity and interviewed by a trained police official in a victim sensitive manner;
2. Victims should be assisted in a Victim Friendly Room (VFR) or an alternative room where the statement will be taken in private or other location providing victim support services;
3. Victims will be referred/taken for medical examination by the healthcare professional to obtain medical evidence and complete a medical report including seeing to the health of the victim;

4. The investigation should be conducted by the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences Investigation Unit (FCS) or a detective with relevant training;
5. The families and victims of sexual offences, femicide and infanticide should all be referred to victim support services that are available within the precinct for legal, medical, social and psychological help;
6. Victims should be proactively with feedback on the progress of their cases on continuous basis – I stress this must be proactive on our part as police investigators

Each police station will have these 6 Points posted visibly at the police station and awareness including a national instruction has been prepared in this regard.

From the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> August here in Tshwane I will host an Action Indaba with all stakeholders we can get under one roof to once and for all come up with an Action Plan and Declaration which will bind the SAPS and all of us to break the back on domestic violence and its accompanying crimes, the gender based violence.

The offences of domestic violence, rape, femicide and infanticide particularly, are surrounded by strong feelings, and insensitive interviewing of a victim by police or friends of a victim already humiliated and degraded, may cause further trauma.

**We must not re-humiliate NOR re-victimize the victims at our Police Stations. We must make sure each Police Station has a VFR, a Victim Friendly Room.**

**When we suspect our loved one is missing, report the matter to police immediately. There is no waiting period.**

**No Victim must be sent away from a police station without a case being opened and a proper interview made. We need not see bruises to open a case.**

**Each slap on the face is a potential femicide.**

**Each unwanted touching is a potential rape.**

**Each nasty word, harassment to LGBTQ community is a potential hate crime.**

**Each verbal abuse of a woman because of her dress is a potential rape.**

Allow me conclude with this important policy statement. Whilst some allegations of rape may be false, all investigations must commence on the premise that the complainant is a **GENUINE VICTIM**. Police and community should **NOT** be courts of law. Courts are the only centers to pronounce **GUILT OR NOT GUILTY**.

**WE HAVE NO TIME TO WASTE TIME, AYIHLOME IHLASELE AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.**

**FA MBALULA, MP**

**MINISTER OF POLICE**