

Speaker Notes for Police Minister General Bheki Cele on the occasion of the Annual Police Day Commemorations hosted in Pretoria on 27 January 2022

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Good morning Maphoyisa!

To all of you who wear this blue uniform and serve this nation with integrity and pride.

Today is the day that we celebrate YOU!

This day is set aside to appreciate ALL serving members as well as to pay homage to those who have fallen.

We are all here to commemorate and reflect on the policing year that was.

This year's commemoration of National Police Day is dedicated to the contribution of women in policing. Malibongwe.

This is why we have themed this year "Celebrating the Role of Women in Policing".

We appreciate in our presence, the female Generals who took the road less travelled and paved the way for the current crop of female police officers.

We salute those female trailblazers that against all odds, demonstrated that women are more than up to the task to lead with integrity and excellence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Blue Excellence comes to mind when I think about some of the many female police officers, in our boardrooms or those patrolling the streets.

They each day, demonstrate Blue Excellence in their work and conduct.

Thank you Maphoyisa for delivering one of the most safest Festive Seasons to date.

It is through your dedication and hard work that South Africans were safer during these holiday period and you managed to keep crime at minimal levels.

Commissioner,

Allow me to take this opportunity to extend a special welcome and appreciation to three such women officers who are servicing this organization with excellence.

I would like to convey appreciation to my three special guests, Lieutenant Colonel JB Buthelezi, Captain Z Rehaman and Sergeant R Tladi.

These women officers have made me proud in various ways:

Sergeant Tladi's passion for solving crimes committed against women and children cannot be understated.

She has flown the country's flag high, through her investigative work that resulted in five life

sentences and 1088 years imprisonment imposed on a convicted Pretoria serial rapist.

I know there are many more officers like Sergeant Tladi in this organization who have taken up the call to improve their service to victims of GBV and go beyond the call of duty to ensure justice is served.

I would also like to send a special and warm welcome to Captain Rehaman, who as a senior female SAPS pilot continues to soar. May her actions inspire more female colleagues in this organization to continue take to the skies and cement their place in this environment of the SAPS.

Lastly, a special acknowledgement to another powerhouse in her own right, Lieutenant Colonel Buthelezi.

This officer has worked in many complex and delicate investigations. She continues to crack cases that restore public confidence and bring closure to families when perpetrators are put behind bars.

Colonel Buthelezi is also part of a team that has investigated the slain football star Senzo Meyiwa's murder case.

GENDER EQUALITY

Against whatever odds, I am very proud of the milestones women of the SAPS continue to achieve in the policing environment, which was, up until January 1972, reserved for ONLY men.

It has not been easy for women to make their mark in previously male dominated units within the organization.

I am happy that this organisation values the importance of gender equality, demonstrated by the increasing number of women in all levels of managerial positions.

However we are still not where we should be in this regard and greater empowerment of women in the SAPS is not a negotiable and must be realized.

Today, we pay tribute to all SAPS members, for the sacrifices they make to ensure there is safety and security in the republic.

Salute to the men and women in blue who each day promote the SAPS values and integrity.

We also celebrate the police profession and its role in South Africa and in society at large.

As we commemorate, let us also focus our energies on what still needs to be done to create a safer environment for all the people in South Africa.

I have no doubt that this SAPS organisation is filled with officers; men AND women, who are more than are up to the task.

Commissioner,

We must never tire from flushing out the few rotten apples who hide behind this beautiful blue uniform but choose the life of criminality.

The pockets of criminality within our organisation, cannot and will not tarnish the excellence we are celebrating today.

Our Police Officers are the SAPS' and country's most valuable resource.

We believe that celebrating YOU and acknowledging your hard work, this will certainly improve the morale of the workforce to provide better excellent service to the public.

As I conclude

Today is about all the Constables, Sergeants, Warrant Officers, Captains, Colonels, Brigadiers and all the Generals of the SAPS.

We especially celebrate all the officers on the ground, society's first line of defence.

We celebrate you and we want you to know your commitment to the organization and the fight against crime is valued.

We lastly salute ALL the women of this organization.

Malibongwe igama lama khosikazi!

I Thank you