

Speech for the Minister of Police, Mr Senzo Mchunu, at the Release of the Fourth Quarter Crime Statistics, at the GCIS offices, on 23 May 2025

2025/05/23

Acknowledgements and Introduction

Good morning to:

**Deputy Minister of Police, Mr Cassel Mathale,
National Commissioner, General Fannie Masemola,
Head of the DPCI, Dr/Adv General Godfrey Lebeya,
Deputy National Commissioners present,
Divisional Commissioners,
Provincial Commissioners connected virtually,
Heads of Entities present, Mr Thulani Sibuyi,
Director-General of the Civilian Secretariat for Police Service,
Crime Registrar of the SAPS, Major-General Thulare Sekhukhune,
Members of the media, those present here today and those on virtual platforms,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

1. Today, we gather here to present the crime statistics for the fourth quarter of the 2024/2025 financial year, covering the period from 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025.

2. The annual crime statistics will be released in September; these will give us an overall picture of the crime statistics for the 2024/2025 financial year.

3. As the Ministry of Police under the 7th Administration, we have clearly outlined our policing priorities, these include: reducing the murder rate, reducing illegal firearms and tightening controls over legal firearms, fighting Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBV+F), dismantling organised crime, including drug trafficking syndicates, Cash-In-Transit heists, extortion, and kidnappings,

tackling gang violence and combating corruption—both within the SAPS and across the country. Taxi violence is also receiving our attention, as we work together with the Minister of Transport.

CLARITY ON MISINFORMATION

4. In the last few days, we have seen conversations and concerns about crime in SA taking a totally different turn, the term “genocide” got forcefully introduced to the scene, in a distinctly foreign and strange manner. It is claimed that there is “white genocide” in South Africa and as evidence, a lot of material has been put into circulation, including in the White House, in the USA. These materials include pictures of crosses along a particular road, to name a few.

5. We have respect for the USA as a country, we have respect for the people in that country and for President Trump, but we have no respect for this genocide story – at all. It is totally unfounded and unsubstantiated.

6. We have noted doubt expressed by media houses in the USA, UK and in South Africa, and we welcome it. South Africa is a full democratic state, with a lot of

NGOs, NPOs and free media – they would have run headlines both locally and abroad if there was any genocide.

7. The picture of many crosses on both sides of a dirt road between Newcastle and Normandien in KZN, flows from a Normandien registered case 19/08/2020, where the incident occurred on 2020/09/30, on Hanover farm. It is a sad story of Mr G Rafferty and Mrs VL Rafferty – they were sadly murdered by criminals in their home. The incident sparked a very strong protest by the farming community. The crosses symbolised killings on farms over years, they are not graves. Three suspects were arrested and sentenced for their murder and they are in jail.

8. This debunks the claim that nothing gets done when crime is committed. Three months ago, an American pastor got kidnapped in Nelson Mandela Bay; this led to an intensive search by South African Police Service; the suspects were arrested and the pastor was freed back to America. Again, law was enforced.

9. We do not deny that the levels of crime in the country are high – we are very concerned. Crime cuts across all divides. We are currently intensifying the fight against crime and criminals. The crime stats we are presenting today will show progress; we commend and encourage the SAPS to fight on and harder. We will win.

10. The crime statistics are based on crimes that get reported and we see a decline in various categories of crime as will be reported today. We note that there is more crime in terms of daily lived experience and a feeling of vulnerability. It is for this reason that we are adjusting our methods of fighting crime and adapting to the new trends and threats out there.

FINDINGS OF THE FOURTH QUARTER

11. Turning to the fourth quarter statistics: as with previous quarters, we are seeing significant decreases in most crime categories when compared to the same period in the preceding financial year (1 January to 31 March 2024). While we have not yet reached our ultimate goals, these figures confirm that we are indeed making significant progress.

12. We must however, be clear-eyed about the challenges that remain. During this quarter, sexual offences, including rape and contact sexual offences, along with commercial crime, have shown increases. These are deeply concerning trends that demand renewed focus and urgent intervention.

13. Let me be unequivocal: every crime that is reported in South Africa, is recorded and accounted for by the South African Police Service – whether it occurs in an urban area or in the most remote and rural areas.

STATS ON MURDER

14. We are encouraged that all but one province recorded decreases in murder incidents. The Northern Cape, despite contributing only 2% to the national murder statistics, recorded an increase, which cannot be ignored and will be addressed with targeted actions.

15. The four high-crime provinces—Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and the Eastern Cape, contributed the bulk of murder incidents nationally. Yet, when compared to the same period last year, the current statistics offer some encouragement. Among the top 30 police stations for murder, 13 stations registered lower counts, and two stations recorded no change. We will continue to intensify our efforts to reduce the overall murder rate.

16. Regrettably, we must report the loss of 22 police officers —six while on duty, and 16 while off duty, with 10 of those in Gauteng alone. This is not just a loss to the SAPS but to the entire nation. Let me be clear: an attack on a police officer is an attack on the state, and those responsible will face the full might of the law.

STATS ON FARM ATTACKS AND PROGRESS ON CASES

17. We have, on a number of occasions, appeared before the Portfolio Committee to account for our strategy in protecting rural communities. Our National Rural Safety Strategy is designed to create a safe and secure environment in rural areas. We are committed to fully realising and implementing this strategy. As from this year, when we release the first quarter results, we will include a number of other categories of crime in the country, to show a fuller picture. For 5 an example, killings in rural and urban areas, instead of just on commercial farms, but for now, our statistics are based on commercial farms.

18. In the fourth quarter, six attacks on rural communities were recorded as follows:

Farm owners	2
Farm dwellers	1
Farm employees	2
Farm manager	1

19. In principle, we do not categorise people by race, but in the context of claims of “genocide of White people”, we need to unpack the killings in this category. The two farm owners that were murdered during the fourth quarter were African and not White. Further to that, the two farm employees and one farm manager were also African – it is the one farm dweller that was White. I do also want to mention that the recent farm murder, which occurred in Roosenekal in Limpopo occurred in the first quarter of the current financial year and will thus be reflected in the release of the next crime statistics. The history of farm murders in the country has always been distorted and reported in an unbalanced way; the truth is that farm murders have always included African people in more numbers.

20. We want to reject the notion of “land grabbing” in the country but instead, confirm that we do have cases of land invasions and the two are very different. Land invasions are not government policy, but are

by and large, acts of desperation for land by African people who find themselves landless and in need to settle. It is sporadic and it remains unlawful – hence the cases and investigations thereof. This is what has warranted expropriation without compensation to address the problem in a lawful, systematic way.

21. My colleague in Land Reform and Rural Development has confirmed his concerns against this misleading notion and he will clarify that next week.

22. Last quarter, we reported that a total of 12 farm murders had been reported, with one farm owner having been murdered. Notable progress has been made in respect of investigations into these cases, and a number of arrests have been made. We do want to assure South Africans that the SAPS prioritises all types of crimes and conducts thorough investigations to ensure that justice is ultimately served.

23. A total of 178 757 suspects were arrested in this period under review. It has been reported that the prison population has been exceeded - this is indicative of the police work that leads to arrests, sentencing and ultimately, imprisonment.

RAPE STATS AND EFFORTS TO FIGHT GBV+F

24. In respect of sexual offences, rape increased. Gauteng and KZN contribute 19.1% and 19.9% respectively to the national total. In the quarter under review, decreases in rape statistics were recorded in Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Limpopo, North West, and the Western Cape.

25. While we acknowledge that GBV+F affects all genders, women remain disproportionately affected by rape, assault GBH, and murder. Our resolve to fight GBV+F is unwavering.

26. To this end, the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster (JCPS) has launched a 90-day GBV+F blitz, which began on 1 May 2025. This includes the revival of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on GBV+F, tasked with coordinating government interventions, resolving systemic bottlenecks, and ensuring measurable progress. NatJoins is leading the coordination of frontline safety and protection efforts.

ILLEGAL FIREARMS AND SUCCESSES VIA OPERATION SHANELA

27. Firearms remain the most frequently used instruments in the commission of murder, followed by knives. One of our stated priorities is the reduction of illegal firearms and the tightening of control over legally owned firearms. In the quarter under review, 4,023 cases of illegal possession of firearms and ammunition were registered—a 2.7% increase compared to the same period last year. 28. A total of 16 049 firearms were destroyed by the SAPS in February this year. In addition, Operation Shanela continues to deliver results. 1641 illegal firearms and 24 288 rounds of ammunition were seized during this reporting period.

COMMERCIAL CRIMES AND DPCI SUCCESSES

29. Commercial crime increased by 1,581 counts in the fourth quarter, representing a 4.7% rise. Gauteng (12,074) and the Western Cape (7,244) recorded the highest numbers. We commend the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI) for their continued efforts: 656 suspects appeared in

court during this quarter: 364 from Serious Organised Crime 220 from Serious Commercial Crime, 72 from Serious Corruption. We urge the DPCI to remain steadfast in executing their constitutional mandate.

STOCKTHEFT AND SUCCESSES

30. Stock-theft is one of the priority crimes for the police, as it not only threatens the financial stability of our agricultural sector but also undermines the livelihoods of countless families who depend on livestock for their sustenance and economic well-being. An 8,9% decrease in stock-theft has been recorded in this quarter we are reporting on. Back in March, we convened a stakeholder engagement in the Free State – this was well attended by various stakeholders from the Free State, KZN, Limpopo and Eastern Cape. The focus of the engagement was to engage those largely affected by stock-theft on the measures employed by the SAPS and to engage on what can be done in strengthening those measures. The engagement was successful, and we have full confidence in the various Stock Theft Units throughout the country.

31. On Wednesday, the Eastern Cape SAPS recovered stolen livestock in Qumbu, Matatiele, Maclear and Tsolo during their operations. The recovered livestock included 231 cattle to the value of R 2,7 million, 81 sheep worth over R 160 000.00 and 78 goats worth over R 150 000.00. We commend the various teams for this and we urge them to remain vigilant and to continue in their efforts to fight stocktheft.

MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO REINFORCE POLICING

32. Ladies and Gentlemen, last month we convened our National Policing Summit. The insights and resolutions from the various commissions will now move into implementation phase. We are steadfast in our commitment to building a policing system that is effective, efficient, responsive and professional—a service that reflects the values and aspirations of our democracy.

33. The National Policing Policy was approved by Cabinet on the 15th of May, giving effect to Section 206 of the Constitution which mandates the Minister of Police to determine the National Policing Policy with provincial governments in consideration of the provinces policing needs and priorities. The National Policing Policy aims to, amongst others, strengthen police service delivery to communities by ensuring professionalism and efficiencies in policing and is supported by the Integrated Crime & Violence Prevention Strategy, which seeks to address crime and violence at its root cause.

34. As a measure to intensify our efforts against crime, we are repositioning police to confront crime with more vigour and sharpness. To achieve this, we have had to review our organogram and divide Visible Policing (VisPol). All the legislative processes have been undertaken, inclusive of engagements in the Safety and Security Sectoral Bargaining Council (SSSBC). The division will lead to two division, namely: VisPol and the Operational Response Services (ORS). We will soon be appointing a Divisional Commissioner to head ORS; processes in respect of that appointment are underway.

35. Currently, there are 5500 trainees at the various SAPS Academies; passing out parades will be in August and November.

36. A number of enablers have been identified, which will be key in the fight against crime. Improving the efficiency of our forensic services is critical. To this end, we are increasing the number of our laboratories throughout the country, and we are equipping them with state of the art equipment and technology. We will be entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the CSIR, for the use of their facility to assist with backlogs in the Gauteng province. Further to this, we will be establishing a laboratory in KZN and following a number of meetings with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, processes in this respect are at an advanced stage. We will ensure that there are labs in Mpumalanga and will extend to other provinces such as Limpopo and the Free State.

37. Other enablers which have been identified and which we will be implementing are: the adoption and improvement of technology to enhance detection, response, and analysis, strengthening Crime Intelligence, capacitating and upskilling our detectives and finally, the improvement of the general environment under which our police officers operate. We are focusing on improving the conditions of our police stations, for better citizen experience and conducive working environments for our members; this includes the building of new police stations and the refurbishment of existing ones.

CONCLUSION

38. Before I conclude, I do want to urge the public to exercise caution when consuming and sharing information, especially on social media platforms, where old or recycled news stories are often circulated to create panic. These outdated reports can give the false impression that crime is spiralling out of control, when in fact they do not reflect the current reality. We remind the public to remain vigilant against fake news and misinformation. For accurate and timely updates on incidents, please rely on official SAPS communication channels, as we remain committed to keeping communities informed and safe at all times.

39. Ladies and gentlemen, the path ahead is still long, but we are making progress. And together, with an informed, engaged, and responsible society, we will win this fight against crime. Thank you