

**LAUNCH OF PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NPA AND GBVF FUND IN TACKLING THE
CONSEQUENCES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
ADDRESS BY NOLITHA FAKUDE PRESIDENT OF MINERALS COUNCIL SOUTH
AFRICA
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Good morning colleagues

Thank you for joining us here today and for heading the call.

Please allow me to start events today by illustrating the deeply tragic and unacceptable level of violence against women in our country. The horrifying data in the latest crime statistics will put into context why we as the mining industry are partnering with the National Prosecuting Authority's Sexual Offences and Community Affairs Unit and the private-sector led GBVF Response Fund to support the Thuthuzela Care Centres for victims of gender-based violence, with a particular focus in mining communities and our labour-sending areas.

Please take time to reflect on the numbers I'm about to tell you. They are truly shocking and more so if you consider the immense and lasting psychological damage done to families, children and the fabric of our society.

There were 989 women murdered between July and September 2022, a 10% increase year on year, while attempted murders of women rose by the same percentage to 1,277 cases.

Rape cases reported to the police increased by nearly 11% to 10,590 incidents, with many of these happening at the residences of the victims or perpetrators. Sexual assaults increased by 8% to 1,895.

These trends are horrifying when you consider the all the attention women's rights are receiving, our annual 16 Day of Activism every November to highlight violence against women

and children, and the initiatives launched by President Cyril Ramaphosa over the past three years since 2019. As President Ramaphosa says: *“If a nation’s character can be judged by how it treats women and children, then we are falling desperately short.”*

The government launched the National Strategic Plan to Combat Gender-based Violence and Femicide (NSP) in 2020, and the government has outlined interventions to respond to GBVF. This includes legislative reform, support to survivors through the provision of evidence kits at police stations and psycho-social services, the establishment of a GBVF Fund and supporting the network of Thuthuzela and Khuseleka Care Centres.

Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, the minister of women, youth and persons with disabilities, said recently at the second Presidential Summit on GBVF that the National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Bill she gazetted in September this year should be signed into law by April 2023. The process of developing this legislation started after the declaration of the Presidential Summit Against Gender-Based Violence and Femicide in November 2018.

However, we can see in the deeply disturbing trends in the crime statistics that we are simply not gaining traction in halting and reversing the violence against women in South Africa. It’s a clarion call that we must do more. We must take each and every opportunity to play our part in not only addressing and ending this scourge but to also provide care and support for victims of gender-based violence. These women must have confidence that there will be true justice against the perpetrators.

With this in mind, the mining industry, through the Minerals Council and the founding companies of Anglo American, Fraser Alexander and Sedibelo Resources, have agreed a memorandum of understanding with the NPA’s Sexual Offences and Community Affairs Unit and the private-sector led GBVF Response Fund for a partnership to support and work with the NPA’s Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs) in communities near mines or in mining and labour-sending areas.

There are more than 60 TCCs in South Africa, mainly located near hospitals and they offer integrated services of immediate care and counselling for victims, collection of evidence and to ensure that cases are managed with the prosecution process in mind.

Glencore and Sibanye-Stillwater have recently built new centres and plan to build more, with Sibanye noting the unequivocal need for these centres to have safe houses attached to them so victims of gender-based violence have an alternative to going back into a dangerous situation with the perpetrators. Glencore noted that in the Steelpoort area feedback it had received was that women reporting rapes had awful experiences at police stations when reporting these crimes. Its new Thuthuzela Care Centre was intended to address this by providing professional support, criminal processes and legal advice.

You will shortly hear from mining companies making pledges to build Thuthuzela Care Centres or to provide funding to ensure this partnership works.

We, as the Minerals Council, will, in consultation with our member companies and partners, assess the needs of our communities and whether we can provide more of these care centres and safe houses.

The intention of the partnership is to streamline and facilitate the involvement of the mining industry in providing support and resources to TCCs as part of an organised and deliberate contribution to the efforts to help to any person, including those in mining communities and labour-sending areas where research shows GBVF, experiencing gender-based violence.

Our society is broken, and we must do what we can to provide care to the victims of these terrible crimes and to ensure the perpetrators are arrested and convicted.

Many mining companies have internal programmes and initiatives to address gender-based violence and sexual harassment at their operations, with zero tolerance of these reprehensible acts. However, we realise these matters are a fundamental problem within society and this includes communities in which our employees live. This partnership is a way to extend our interventions in GBVF beyond mine gates and assist those most in need and are at their most vulnerable.

Mining communities are often in remote or rural areas, making it more difficult to access services such as those provided by the Thuthuzela Care Centres. A victim of GBV in a rural village or a small town is often forced to navigate the experience alone, without any support or intervention except perhaps the help of neighbours. Research has shown that

As mining companies, we have ongoing relationships with the local communities in which our mines are located. Through our Social and Labour Plans, we support development projects, build skills and try to address some of the most urgent needs around us. In the course of our work, we interact with tribal authorities, local municipalities and provincial governments. We are uniquely placed to make a difference to the social landscape around our mines, and we want to use this opportunity to help provide services to victims of GBV.

The partnership we are launching here today will be a long-term initiative to facilitate and deliver support and resources to the Thuthuzela Care Centres. The Minerals Council will actively encourage member companies to work together to provide support to these centres. We will also coordinate partnership opportunities and engage our members on choosing and implementing their chosen projects. Mining companies will actively engage with the centres in their areas, or to sponsor new centres where they are needed.

As a sign of our commitment to the partnership, the Minerals Council will employ a dedicated person to oversee its participation in the partnership.

The NPA will reach separate agreements with mining companies to implement the partnership opportunity and it will report back twice a year on the status of these projects.

The GBVF Response Fund supports the implementation of the National Strategic Plan on GBVF by raising financial and non-financial resources and directing these resources to high-impact organisations tackling gender-based violence. The Fund will provide advice and strategic guidance to the Partnership, assisting in identifying partnership opportunities and providing technical support to mining companies participating in the Partnership.

A Partnership Advisory Board will be set up and comprise two members of the NPA Sexual Offences and Community Affairs Unit, two from GBVF Response Fund, and eight from the Minerals Council and participating mining companies. The Board will meet every quarter to assess projects and partnerships.

This partnership will be given every possible means of support from the Minerals Council and its members to ensure it flourishes and that abused women and children have a safe, professional environment to get all the help they need to break the cycle of violence.

We must not lose focus on addressing the underlying causes of gender-based violence and femicides. It is a major initiative in mining companies. We are working hard in each of our companies to prevent the alarming increase in victims of violence against women. We have an enormous challenge of this unacceptable behaviour coming through our mine gates from our communities. We, as the mining industry, don't have a silver bullet to resolve societal ills. We must strive for more meaningful partnerships to address GBVF. Let us bring organised labour, NGOs, local, municipal and national government, religious groupings, and schools into our quest for Zero Harm. Together we can make a difference.

Many thanks.