

## **President Ramaphosa chose Mr Bheki Cele over the Safety and Lives of Women**

**By Karabo Khakhau DA MP**

Ha ke lebohe motsamaisi oa dipuisano,

Honourable Speaker, when the first Women's Global Leadership Institute initiated the campaign on "16 days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence" in 1991, it absolutely did not imagine that 31 years later, this house would still be debating how to get the South African State to finally deliver us from this evil.

The institute did not imagine that:

1. In 2022, 148 women open assault with grievous bodily harm cases in this country every day;
2. That in South Africa, over 10 590 people would've been raped between July and September alone; and
3. That the latest quarterly crime statistics would paint the painful picture of 536 cases of attempted sexual offences, 1 895 cases of sexual assault, 262 contact sexual offences and the killing of 989 women.

The bottom line is that as horrifying as these stats are, they still do not factor in everyone else who is battling gender-based violence and femicide in silence.

Honourable Speaker, the institute did not imagine that le tsatsing le na ha re ya di kantonorong tsa maponesa re tla be re botsoa dipotso tse tlongtlohang, tse diang mea, tse re qosang joalo ka hore re ne re entseng ha re tla otloa, le hore re ne re apereng ha re tla betoa.

The institute did not imagine that three decades later, the President of a democratic South African government would choose an opportunity to score internal ANC political points over securing the daily lives and safety of women.

Yes, Honourable Speaker, President Ramaphosa has sold us out!

For him, gender-based violence and femicide remains a mere conversation appetizer that is meant to make him and his government seem somewhat relevant and aggrieved by the pain of being brutally murdered, raped and assaulted for simply being a woman!

If this were not true, police stations would be safe spaces and we would've seen an implementation of effective monitoring mechanisms for cases of GBV.

If this were not true, he would have fired Minister Bheki Cele by now! We wouldn't be cursed with a Police Minister who considers it lucky to be raped by one man instead of many.

We wouldn't be cursed with a Police Minister that has absolutely no clue nor care to deal with this plague.

If this were not true, Madam Speaker, President Ramaphosa would have done more than to be shocked all the time and deliver a summit with no tangible and sustainable outcomes and progress to tackle gender-based violence and femicide head on as his alfa and omega strategy.

So, what remains clear is that President Ramphosa and Minister Cele do not care about us.

Under their watch, our blood and souls are mere sacrificial products.

Through you, Honourable Speaker, allow me to say this to President Ramaphosa:

Mr President, the first step to empowering women and building resilience against gender-based violence and femicide is to appoint a Minister that is capable, that cares and understands the mandate of the people he represents and serves.

That person is definitely not Minister Cele.

So, I dare you, Mr President, choose us. Honour your commitment to serve and protect. Get rid of Minister Cele with immediate effect!