



ANC PARLIAMENTARY Caucus

Newsletter.

NOV

16 DAYS

OF ACTIVISM FOR NO VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN
25 NOVEMBER - 10 DECEMBER



LETSEMA

Men, Women, Boys
and Girls working
together to end GBVFi



EDITOR'S NOTE



Dear Comrades

This November Issue of our Caucus Newsletter is the last one in our series for this year. The objective of these newsletters is to provide a platform for reflection upon the policies of the African National Congress and the guiding principles and goals to achieve our aims, primarily focused on overcoming apartheid's legacy through equality, economic development, and national unity.

Every month we have sought

to highlight achievements, problems and challenges and to stimulate debate by sharing the views and positions held by our Caucus Members on a wide range of issues. This collective effort, drawing from the wealth of information and experience from our members who fulfil a range of roles, both within the parliamentary Caucus and in their communities, is intended to be accessible to a wide range of readership and meant to be informative, conversational and, at times, to be provocative.

We would like to acknowledge, with thanks, all those Members who readily accepted our requests, contributed their time and talent to write those articles and for their timeous submission. We have sought to be as inclusive as possible by ensuring we approach as many Members as possible for contributions and will continue to reach out to many more in the coming year.

As we approach the 2026 Local Government Elections, we must reinforce the many gains we have made in the various by-elections held in the preceding months by intensifying service delivery and ensuring accountability. Our

people's evident confidence in the ANC's renewal and service delivery agenda must not be taken for granted nor squandered. With this in mind, we are exploring an addition to our publication series which will focus solely on our Constituency work, highlighting the outreach activities that Members manage in their Parliamentary Constituency Offices.

Next year as we celebrate the 114th anniversary of the ANC, we do so against the backdrop of acknowledging that we will also be celebrating the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). We hope to feature these events in our special edition publications and trust that we can count on our members' support.

Best wishes for a safe and peaceful festive season •

Warmest regards

Cde Anusha Pillay



16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

END ALL FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE BY ENCOURAGING PERSONAL AND SOCIETAL ACTION AND ADVOCATING FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE



As we launch this year's 16 Days of Activism Campaign, I strongly condemn all forms of violence, particularly those targeting women and children, who remain disproportionately affected. South Africa officially adopted this campaign in 1998. The purpose of this campaign is to raise awareness and mobilize intensified action toward the complete eradication of violence against vulnerable groups.



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Each year, from 25 November to 10 December various initiatives are implemented to amplify awareness with the intention of fostering meaningful change, and the country and its people recommit to this cause annually. There is a need to refocus and change tactics, and that can only happen through an honest appraisal of the campaign. There needs to be an honest reflection and collection of information on whether the government has made any attempts to measure



must be differently tailored to cater for intersectionality and diversity of women and children.

This campaign also includes a focus on Women Human rights Defenders. The Commission for Gender Equality is one institution set up to defend the human rights of women. For this institution to effectively fulfil this important mandate, adequate resourcing and support should be provided. We need not only rely on institutions to defend the rights of women, every society, every home must have women human rights defenders. We need men to be defenders of human rights of women. We also need the society to protect those who stand to defend the human rights of women. Men as defenders of human rights of women include taking up responsibility to protect women, for example refraining from intentionally infecting women with the HIV/AIDS virus, as well as non-consensual sharing of intimate images. These are some of the important actions of defenders of women's human rights.

For persons with disabilities, being unable to secure employment despite quotas set by government; facing various structural barriers that hinder the ability to access certain buildings and facilities including, in some instance, educational and work facilities can be regarded as another form of violence against persons with disabilities. This form of violence also needs to be amplified during the 16 Days campaign •

and evaluate the impact of this campaign, and whether any positive impact has been registered. Measuring the impact of this campaign is about ensuring that implemented programs are evidence based and tackle root causes of violence at both the individual and societal levels.

While the campaign focuses on violence against women and children, we must also confront the uncomfortable reality of women perpetrating violence against their own children. Addressing all forms of violence, regardless of the perpetrator, is essential to achieving lasting change.

The strategies to be adopted should be developmental in

nature and embedded within families and communities. One of the strategies that need serious consideration is the socialization and parenting of children. The parenting of children is an important vehicle for changing behaviours of individuals as well as contributing to broader societal changes.

The intersectionality and diversity of women should be taken into consideration when designing programs aimed at ending violence against women. Women are not a homogenous group, and how they experience violence is decided by various factors such as age, disability, sexual orientation, economic status, and geographic areas. Lasting and meaningful impact



A THREAT TO ALL:

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

AS A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DESTROYER OF LIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA

The African National Congress has always regarded the exploitation of human beings as a direct assault on the Freedom Charter's promise that "The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth" and that "There Shall Be Work and Security." From the mines of apartheid to the forced labour camps of the present day, the commodification of human lives is a continuation of the same oppressive logic the ANC was formed to defeat.

Trafficking in human beings, especially women and girls, is not new. Historically, it has taken many forms: ancient slavery, the transatlantic trade, indentured labour under colonialism. But in the context of globalisation, it has acquired shocking new dimensions. It is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon involving multiple stakeholders at the institutional and commercial level. It is a demand driven global business with a huge market for cheap labour confronting often insufficient or unexercised policy frameworks or trained personnel



CDE M HALA

to prevent it. The primary driving force for the supply is poverty, with associated poor education standards and lack of employment opportunities that propel vulnerable people into the hands of traffickers. The trafficking industry, responding to growing demands for cheap, malleable labour, guarantees a ready supply to satisfy that demand.

The ANC's historical analysis frames trafficking as a symptom of unresolved structural challenges. The National Democratic Revolution (NDR) identified poverty, inequality, and patriarchy as the triple oppression inherited from

colonialism and apartheid. Thirty years into democracy, progress has been made, yet vulnerabilities remain: 55.5 percent of South Africans live below the upper bound poverty line (Stats SA, 2024), youth unemployment stands at 45.5 percent (QLFS Q2 2024), and rural women and children require stronger protection. The ANC's 54th National Conference Resolution on Social Transformation (2017) committed to "intensify the fight against human trafficking as a form of gender-based violence and economic exploitation." Building on this foundation, the ANC now has the opportunity to lead a coordinated, whole of government and whole of society response to fulfil this mandate.

Globalisation has reshaped economic relationships, and we recognise the need to harness its benefits while shielding the vulnerable. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates 27.6 million people in forced labour globally, generating US\$236 billion in illicit profits annually (ILO, 2024). In South Africa, trafficking occurs in agriculture, mining, fisheries,



construction, and domestic work. Workers from rural areas and neighbouring countries are often deceived with false promises, only to face debt bondage, passport confiscation, and harsh conditions. We must see this as a call to deepen the developmental state agenda, ensuring that economic growth translates into decent work and dignity for all.

The demand for cheap labour arises from global supply chains in food production, mineral extraction, and manufacturing. A 2023 Verité report found that 80 percent of forced labour in global electronics supply chains involved deceptive recruitment.

In South Africa, the Walk Free Global Slavery Index (2023) estimates 250,000 people in modern slavery, with Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and KwaZulu Natal as key source areas. Government departments work together to strengthen oversight. The Department of Employment and Labour can expand its inspection capacity with digital

reporting tools. The Department of Home Affairs can enhance border management through biometric systems and real time data sharing with SADC partners. The Department of Social Development can scale up victim support by partnering with civil society to establish community based safe houses.

Prevention begins at the community level. Integrating trafficking awareness into the Life Orientation curriculum from Grade 8, using interactive modules developed with the Department of Basic Education. Community radio stations, traditional leaders, and ANC branches can distribute multilingual materials in high-risk areas.

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) can be prioritised in rural municipalities, offering skills training and stipends to reduce migration driven by desperation. The Department of Small Business Development can support cooperatives in agriculture and

crafts, creating local income opportunities.

Prosecution and protection require investment. Dedicated funding in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework must be allocated to train specialised investigators within the South African Police Service (SAPS) and National Prosecuting Authority (NPA). Fast track courts for trafficking cases can reduce backlogs. The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development can lead the development of a national victim referral pathway, ensuring seamless coordination between police, social workers, and health services. Shelters should offer medical care, counselling, and legal aid.

We must envision a South Africa where no one is for sale. By empowering departments to collaborate, investing in prevention, and mobilising communities, the party can turn its historic commitment into tangible action •



THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES IN COMBATING HIV, INCLUDING REDUCING STIGMA, INCREASING ACCESS TO SERVICES AND DRIVING THE RESPONSE TOWARDS ENDING THE EPIDEMIC

Community-led initiatives are fundamental to South Africa's HIV response, serving as the cornerstone for equitable, effective, and sustainable programs that drive the nation toward ending the epidemic by 2030. By leveraging local knowledge, building trust, and reaching vulnerable populations, these initiatives successfully address critical barriers that formal health systems often struggle to overcome, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

Breaking Down Stigma and Discrimination

One of the most significant contributions of community-led initiatives is in challenging the deep-seated stigma and discrimination surrounding HIV, a major obstacle to testing and treatment. Community



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members, including people living with HIV (PLHIV), act as peers and advocates, fostering supportive environments where individuals feel safe to disclose their status and seek care.

- **Peer Support Networks:** Peer-led support groups provide moral support and practical

advice, helping individuals accept their HIV status, adhere to treatment, and reduce self-stigma.

- **Community Mobilization (CM):** Through CM, residents are engaged to address social barriers and change community norms, which has been shown to temper the reduction in treatment retention rates and increase the likelihood of people knowing their status.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Community-based awareness and education campaigns, often endorsed by local leaders, challenge public misconceptions about HIV and prepare the environment for disclosure to occur without fear of stigma and discrimination.



Expanding Access to Services, Especially in Rural Areas

Formal health systems often struggle to reach remote and underserved rural populations. Community-led initiatives bridge this gap by decentralizing services and leveraging local networks, bringing essential care closer to people's homes.

- **The Backbone of Primary Healthcare:** Community Health Workers (CHWs) are the frontline of this effort. Recruited from local areas and often motivated by their own experiences with the disease, they build trust with community members that external health professionals might not achieve.
- **Door-to-Door Services and Linkage to Care:** CHWs conduct household visits for health education, risk assessment, condom distribution, and referral for testing and treatment. This approach increases the uptake of HIV testing and successfully links newly diagnosed individuals to care facilities.
- **Adherence Support and Defaulter Tracing:** For those on treatment, CHWs provide crucial adherence support, help manage side effects, and trace individuals who have missed appointments. This is essential for maintaining consistent treatment and achieving viral suppression, which in turn prevents further transmission.
- **Innovative Delivery Models:** Differentiated service delivery models, such as community adherence clubs and community drug distribution points, reduce the burden on overloaded clinics, cut down patient waiting times, and

improve retention in care.

- **Role of churches:** Churches are considered well-positioned to actively fight against HIV stigma and raise awareness due to their significant influence in communities and their existing social ties. Churches can encourage testing and treatment by creating a supportive environment, encourage their congregations to get tested and, if positive, adhere to treatment. Advocacy and Community Outreach by Religious institutions often have strong community ties that can be leveraged for broader advocacy efforts, working with local health organizations and government agencies to ensure resources are available and accessible to those in need.

Driving the Response Towards Ending the Epidemic

Beyond service delivery, community-led initiatives serve a crucial watchdog and advocacy role, holding the health system accountable and ensuring that policies and programs are effective and appropriate for the communities they aim to reach.

- **Informing Policy and Programming:** By monitoring clinic performance and gathering data on patient experiences, organizations like the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) in South Africa provide critical feedback that influences national policy and improves service delivery.
- **Achieving UNAIDS Targets:** These efforts are essential for achieving the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets (95% of people living with HIV know their status, 95% of those diagnosed are on treatment, and 95% of those on treatment are virally suppressed). Community-led

distribution of HIV self-testing, for instance, is a particularly effective approach for increasing testing access and linkage to onward treatment.

- **Sustainability and Resilience:** By leveraging volunteer and peer support and advocating for domestic resource mobilization, community initiatives contribute to a resilient and sustainable national health response, reducing reliance on external funding and embedding HIV care within broader, integrated health systems.
- **Accountability and Monitoring:** Through community-led monitoring (CLM) systems, such as the Ritshidze project, communities systematically collect data on service quality, stockouts, and patient experiences in clinics. This data provides a crucial "watchdog" function, holding the government and health systems accountable for the provision of high-quality, rights based services and informing policy makers of what works and what needs improvement. In conclusion, community-led initiatives are not just supplementary; they are an indispensable and transformative force in South Africa's HIV response. Their unique ability to address social, structural, and biomedical challenges simultaneously is the key to building an equitable and sustainable health system capable of ending the HIV epidemic•



IN DEFENCE OF NON-RACIALISM:

THE ANC'S ENDURING COMMITMENT TO MINORITY RIGHTS AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor." When Honourable Skhosana of the MK Party declared in a parliamentary session that "this country is in a mess because of him," referring to the late Comrade Pravin Gordhan, the remark reverberated far beyond the walls of Parliament.

The remark was more than a personal insult to the late Comrade PG; it was an affront to the values of nonracialism, equality, and respect that define our democracy. The ANC condemns these remarks in the strongest terms, not only because they are factually unfounded and insensitive to the departed who cannot defend himself on the allegation, but because they reveal a worrying erosion of the principles that underpin our democratic society. This incident provides an opportunity for reflection not just the life of the late Comrade Gordhan's legacy, but on the broader rights of minorities to participate in politics and hold public office, and the ANC's historic role in accommodating all groupings within its leadership.



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Pravin Gordhan: A Life of Service and Principle

Comrade Pravin Gordhan's contribution to South Africa transcends party lines and political disputes. Comrade Pravin embodied moral courage, ethical governance, and deep patriotism that the democratic state so desperately needs. From his early activism in the anti-apartheid struggle to his leadership as Finance Minister and later Minister of Public Enterprises, Comrade Pravin was a selfless leader of the movement guided by the principle of service above self and understanding that public office is a platform for service and not self-enrichment. Throughout the different turns in his political career, Comrade Pravin faced persecution and

misinformation on his intentions as a leader and a public office bearer — yet he never abandoned his principles. Both the Zondo Commission of Inquiry into State Capture and the Nugent Commission into SARS cleared him of any wrongdoing. Instead, they affirmed his commitment to transparency and accountability. To attack his name, particularly after his passing, is to insult a lifetime dedicated to building an inclusive, accountable, and democratic movement and by extension, government.

The Right to Belong, Participate, and Lead

Section 19 of our Constitution enshrines the right of every citizen to participate in political life, to join and form political parties, and to stand for public office. These rights are universal, not dependent on one's race, religion, or ancestral lineage. When individuals in Parliament use racial or ethnic undertones to question a person's right to lead, they are not simply breaching parliamentary decorum — they are in fact undermining the Constitution itself. Comrade Pravin, like many other comrades from minority communities stood shoulder to shoulder with all comrades engaged in the



liberation struggle. As is a popular slogan in the organization; 'history has no blank pages', their contributions and sacrifices are well engraved in the nation's history. To now question their place in a democratic government leadership is to betray the very ideals for which the struggle was fought. The notion of an "Indian cabal" as articulated by Honourable Skhosana of the MKP, stating that this group is manipulating the levers of state power, is an unfounded conspiracy that directly undermines the ANC's enduring project of non-racialism and inclusive leadership. This ideologically deficient stance to weaponize ethnicity and question the loyalty of these veterans, as was done in the Ad hoc Committee in Parliament, is to profoundly betray the history of our struggle, where these comrades stood shoulder to shoulder with others in the fight for liberation. The position taken by Honorable Skosana to utter such rhetoric is an assault on Section 19 of our Constitution, which guarantees every citizen the universal right to political participation and public office, regardless of ancestral lineage. This backwards-looking, ill-conceived narrative threatens the very renewal of our movement by making minorities feel unwelcome in the political space and cedes the moral high ground to the forces of division.

The ANC and the Tradition of Non-Racialism

In its ideological framework the ANC is guided by the commitment to create a non-racial, non-sexist

and democratic South Africa. To this effect, the philosophy of inclusivity runs deep through every chapter of the ANC's history. It is respected and reflected in the composition of its structures at every level, and the ANC deployment into government. The presence of leaders like Pravin Gordhan, Yunus Carrim and many others who emerge from minority communities is not a coincidence, it is the result of a conscious commitment to build a leadership collective that mirrors the diversity of the nation. When leaders like Gordhan are attacked on the basis of ethnicity, and their contributions scrutinized and treated with suspicion, it sends a chilling message to the of the future of the organization and its principles.

165th anniversary of the arrival of Indian indentured labourers on the SS Truro

As articulated in our ideological framework as the ANC, the presence of comrades of Indian origin in senior positions stretching from the late Comrade Pravin Gordhan to Yunus Carrim is the result of a conscious and principled commitment to build a leadership collective that genuinely mirrors the diversity of the South African nation. In this context of defending our inclusive democracy, the commemoration on November 16, 2025, of the 165th anniversary of the arrival of Indian indentured labourers on the SS Truro holds profound significance. This event is a foundational chapter in the shared story of our nation, one that is interwoven with the broader struggle for justice and equality.

Honoring the sacrifices of those who arrived in 1860 and their descendants is to acknowledge a history of immense contribution, from the sugarcane fields of Natal to the highest echelons of our democratic government. This commemoration powerfully reinforces the ethos of the right to belong, participate, and lead is earned through struggle and service, not dictated by race. Remembering the SS Truro is thus an act of moral reflection, strengthening our collective resolve against those who would use divisive ethnic undertones to question any community's integral place in the South African fabric.

Conclusion: Reclaiming the Moral High Ground for the Renewal of the ANC

The ANC's project of renewal — which includes the rejection of corruption, the promotion of discipline, and the reaffirmation of revolutionary morality — depends on defending these principles. Renewal cannot succeed if the movement allows divisive rhetoric to overshadow its values. It cannot succeed if minorities are made to feel unwelcome within their own political home. We understand too well that there are forces against the ANC's programme of renewal, and some are threatened by it and will do everything they can to discredit those of righteous character. They will not succeed. The ANC's renewal is not just about institutional reform it is also about moral reflection and regeneration to position the ANC as a leader of society •



DIGITAL VIOLENCE:

THE GROWING PROBLEM OF VIOLENCE AND ABUSE OCCURRING IN ONLINE SPACES, AND ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

T From 25 November until 10 December we emphasize the “16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children Campaign” which is a United Nations campaign which takes place annually from the International Day of No Violence against Women (25 November) to International Human Rights Day (10 December). But as South Africans we have converted this campaign into a 365 Days of Activism campaign against Gender-Based Violence. Gender-based violence is a broad term that encompasses domestic violence, intimate partner violence, politically motivated violence, sexual harassment, violence in the workplace, and various forms of digital violence and abuse. This phenomenon is deeply rooted in gender inequality and harmful social norms, where violent acts are perpetrated with the intent of humiliation with the outcome aimed towards asserting superiority. While both women and men experience gender-based violence, the majority of victims are women and girls.



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The United Nations Council for Human Rights (UNCHR) defines gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) as “harmful acts that are directed at an individual based on their gender.”

Within South Africa, gender-based violence is defined as a “general term used to capture violence that occurs as a result of the normative role expectations associated with the gender associated with the sex assigned to a person at birth, as well as the unequal power relations between the genders, within the context of a specific society. GBV

includes physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse or threats of such acts or abuse, coercion, and economic or educational deprivation, whether occurring in public or private life, in peacetime and during armed or other forms of conflict, and may cause physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or economic harm.”

Approaches to addressing violence against women and children involve both response and prevention, supported by international and regional policies and frameworks. Since 1994, South Africa has established a robust legislative framework aimed at combating violence against women and children, underpinned by the Constitution. The country’s approach centres on a multi-sectoral strategy, aligning with goals set out in the National Strategic Plan on GBVF.

Addressing gender-based violence is a complex issue requiring multi-faceted responses and commitment from all stakeholders, including government, civil society, and



citizens. Addressing violence against women has only become more complex to deal with noting that violence against women is also a growing and alarming phenomenon in the digital space.

Gender-based violence among youth in South Africa is a significant issue. Recent studies show alarming prevalence rates, with over half of high school participants in one study reporting experiencing some form of violence and national data indicating young women aged 18-24 are particularly vulnerable to intimate partner violence. Statistics South Africa further reports that almost a quarter (25%) of young women aged 18 to 24 have experienced physical abuse by an intimate partner in the last year and a national study found that 35.4% (one in every

three) adolescents between the ages of 15 and 17 reported having experienced some form of sexual abuse in their lifetime.

Cyberbullying is also a significant issue in South Africa, with one study showing a prevalence of 56.7% among adolescents, and another indicating that 16% of learners are victims of cyberbullying. A global survey found South Africa has the fourth-highest rate of cyberbullying worldwide, with 84% of classmates knowing of someone who has been cyberbullied. These statistics highlight that young people are at a high risk of online harm and that cyberbullying can have serious emotional and academic consequences.

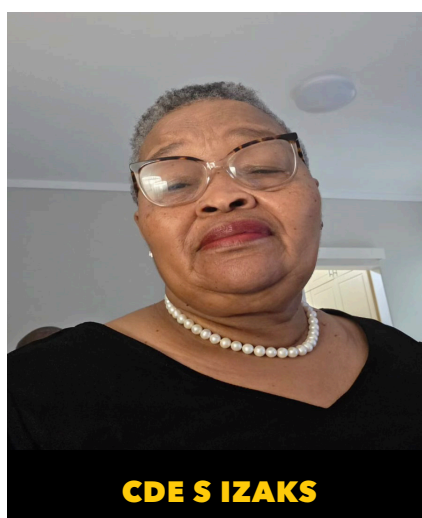
These growing pressures are having a significant negative

impact on the mental and emotional well-being of women and young people, with added anxieties, fear, depression and loss of hope. Many victims withdraw from meaningful activities like participating in education, work and social interactions as a result of digital abuse. We need more men, especially young men, to take a bold stand against all forms of gender-based violence and who are using their digital space responsibly and respectfully. Unfortunately, young men are mostly the perpetrators of gender-based violence within the country. As we continue with the 365 Days of Activism Campaign, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to eradicating gender-based violence and femicide in our physical and digital spaces •

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

A CRUCIAL FACTOR IN ENABLING WOMEN AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO LEAVE OPPRESSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

"The eradication of patriarchy and its associated manifestations requires collaboration from all forces of society. This collaboration across multi-sectoral lines is crucial because patriarchy coexists, survives and is embedded under the most progressive political, societal and cultural systems. Patriarchy continues to be manifested and articulated in many diverse, subtle, hidden as well as open and crude forms. These articulations and manifestations amongst many others includes public patriarchy (which is institutional) and private patriarchy (which is domestic). Intersections between institutional and domestic patriarchy requires critical analysis, to understand how the norms of patriarchy manifest across all facets and systems of society. These manifestations of patriarchy continue to influence gender discriminatory practices, norms and behaviours across political and societal institutions. At a more personal level, patriarchy manifests as gender-based violence (assault and



CDE S IZAKS

battery), verbal, emotional and psychological abuse, financial abuse and ultimately, it manifests as femicide (the loss of life).

"One of the strongest bases of patriarchy is the family, the home and among loved ones. It is the most complex and entrenched system, embedded in and permeating through all spheres of life, it needs all forms of struggle, all forms of persuasion, all forms of contestation, compromise and deconstruction. For its effective eradication, it also requires multisectoral pressure and open confrontation"

South Africa has a strong patriarchal system of social structures that encourage men to dominate, oppress, and exploit women in the public and private spheres. Domestic violence in South Africa is a consequence of the complex interplay of patriarchy, culture, and the negative masculine construct. The patriarchal cultural beliefs and traditions that emphasise on male assertiveness and domination of women continue to influence the constructions of masculinity and reinforce domestic violence². Women with disabilities in South Africa also face systemic and multilayered oppression rooted in the intersectionality of gender, disability, race, and class. This "double jeopardy" results in profound social exclusion, economic marginalization, and limited opportunities, with challenges often more pronounced in rural areas.³ South Africa hence holds one the highest rates of gender-based violence and femicide in the world, with conditions which

1 2021 Women's Charter for Accelerated Development

2 L. Mshweshwe, 2020, "Understanding domestic violence: masculinity, culture, traditions" [www.cell.com/heliyon https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e05334](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e05334)

3 N Thabethe, 2021, "We have no power over perceptions': the lived experiences of women with disabilities in a rural South African community" <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09687599.2021.1976109#abstract>



are compounded by a myriad of other social, economic and cultural norms and practices. According to the world health organization, the frequency at which women fall victim to fatal violence from intimate partners in South Africa is alarmingly five times the global average. The phenomenon of oppressive relationships and gender-based violence, is hence entrenched in various spheres including homes, workplaces, and cultural as well as traditional practices. This crisis, stemming from unequal gender power dynamics,

has far-reaching and devastating impacts that extend well beyond the acts of violence themselves. Oppressive relationships are also perpetuated by entrenched characteristics of toxic masculinity and perspectives that women should occupy an inferior position in society.⁴

Structural Dimensions of Gender-Inequality in South Africa

Structural gender inequality in South Africa⁵ manifests through discriminatory practices in traditional law and culture,

limited economic and political opportunities for women, and systemic barriers within the justice system and service delivery. These conditions also perpetuate unequal access to basic services such housing and sanitation, and systemic failures in addressing gender-based violence, further disadvantage women and reinforce inequality. It is also imperative to recognise the impact of the Intergenerational transmission of patriarchal structures, which reinforces deeply ingrained beliefs about gender roles,

⁴ "Gender Based Violence in South Africa"

<https://www.divorcelaws.co.za/gender-based-violence.html>

⁵ Structural Dimensions of Gender Inequality: The structural dimension of gender inequality refers to the unequal division of power and resources between women and men. These inequalities are assigned through other gendered mechanisms, which are reproduced and maintained at the individual as well as societal level (Okin, 1989). Norms, values and practices give rise to clear distinctions between the sexes and to allocating women as subordinated to men in most important spheres of life, for example, type of education, labour market position, and unpaid duties (Wamala & Lynch, 2002).

<https://eurohealth.ie/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/PB1>



which are transmitted across generations, contributing to the perpetuation of the oppression of women and girls, as well as cyclical inequality and violence.

“The Gender Empowerment Measure presented by the United Nations’ Development Programme is an index measuring differences between women and men in three basic dimensions: economic participation and decision-making, political participation and decision-making and power over economic resources.”⁶ In a study produced by the world bank and Statistics SA, South Africa is characterised as one of the most unequal in the world, with women being disproportionately affected by prevailing conditions of poverty and inequality in South Africa. Based on the dimensions used by the UN Development Programme, the structural dimensions of poverty and inequality continue to perpetuate gender inequality, with a fraction of women in South Africa being economically independent, having limited access to economic resources and political decision-making processes. Furthermore, the current state of South Africa’s economy, (which is characterised by slow economic growth), which continues to be significantly impacted by inherited economic and structural constraints, is a phenomenon that continues to confine the majority of women in oppressive conditions and relationships.

Unpacking Critical Intersections: Structural Dimensions of Gender Equality in South Africa (Public/Institutional Dynamics Impacting Private/Domestic Dimensions)

Wealth remains highly concentrated in South Africa, with persistent poverty entrenched amongst the lowest income deciles, driven largely by income inequality, with women being disproportionately impacted by poverty and income inequality. The economic status of women in South Africa, is hence a major contributing factor, which continues to perpetuate the phenomenon of women remaining in oppressive conditions and relationships. Crisis levels of gender based-violence, including the varied manifestations of patriarchy and oppression meted against women, is rooted in the structural dimensions of gender equality in South Africa, which sustains unequal power relations in the economic, political and economic resource dimensions, as well as various other public institutional norms which perpetuate gender inequality.

The private dimensions of structural patriarchy are hence intrinsically influenced by public dimensions, with income inequality persistent, entrenched and affecting women in larger numbers. “A fresh approach requires growth-enhancing structural economic change matched by public and private investment in productivity enhancing sectors coupled to the development of the necessary

skills and technological knowledge.” These changes at a public level, should also be accompanied by a process of inculcating new public norms to effectively transform and enable uninhibited and effective access to economic opportunity, political decision-making and decision-making over economic resources.

This will then lead to conditions where more women become economically empowered to make life changing decisions, backed by the economic power to determine their own future and quality of life. Economic power in the hands of women, can also inculcate equality norms and uproot patriarchy in the family, the home and among loved ones and all spheres of life.

During the 2025 16 days of activism for no violence against women and children, it is imperative that the composite conditions of violence, discrimination and oppression be recognised in South Africa as a national crisis, based on the commonly recognised and continued low-intensity war and onslaught against women and girls in South Africa. The necessary social compacting strategies must be developed, permeating across all spheres and sectors of society. The pinnacle objection should be geared towards the collective galvanization of all strategic efforts to eradicate structural dimensions of gender equality, which are powered by patriarchy and its varied manifestations in the public and private domains •



NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY (2 NOVEMBER) BEYOND THE PLAYGROUND:

UNPACKING THE RIGHTS OF SOUTH AFRICAN CHILDREN. RIGHTS ENSHRINED IN THE CONSTITUTION AND THE CHILDREN'S ACT, EXPLAIN THEIR SIGNIFICANCE IN EVERYDAY LIFE.

Every year on 2 November, South Africa pauses to celebrate National Children's Day a day

that reminds us of our constitutional promise to prioritize the best interests of every child. While playgrounds and celebrations mark the occasion, the true significance lies in understanding the robust legal framework protecting our children and how these rights manifest in their daily lives.

Section 28 of our Constitution enshrines children's rights as fundamental and non-negotiable. These include the right to a name and nationality from birth, family or parental care, basic nutrition and shelter, basic health care services, social services, and protection from maltreatment, neglect, abuse, or degradation. Critically, the Constitution mandates that "a child's best interests are of



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paramount importance in every matter concerning the child" a principle that guides all legislation, policy, and practice.

The Children's Act 38 of 2005 operationalizes these constitutional guarantees, providing detailed mechanisms for child protection, alternative care, adoption, and early childhood development. This legislation recognizes children not

merely as vulnerable recipients of care, but as rights-bearers whose voices must be heard in decisions affecting them.

These rights translate into tangible protections in everyday life. When a teacher notices signs of abuse and reports to social workers, the Children's Act is at work. When a child receives a birth certificate ensuring access to school and social grants, constitutional rights are being realized. When Child Support Grants reach over 13 million children monthly through DSD's social assistance programs, we witness economic rights in action.

The Department of Social Development, aligned with ANC policy priorities, has developed comprehensive programmes addressing children's holistic needs. The National Development Plan's vision of eliminating poverty



and reducing inequality places children at the centre, recognising that investing in childhood is investing in our nation's future. The ANC's focus on social transformation emphasizes several critical areas for children.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs expand access to quality pre-school education, recognizing that the first 1,000 days shape lifelong outcomes.

The government's commitment to universal healthcare includes free medical care for children under six, ensuring no child is denied treatment due to poverty. Child protection services are being strengthened through increased social worker deployment and community-based prevention programs. The National Action Plan for Children addresses violence, exploitation, and harmful practices, while promoting children's participation in matters affecting

them. DSD's Isibindi model deploys community child and youth care workers who provide home-based support to vulnerable children, bridging the gap between formal services and community care.

Despite progress, challenges persist. Violence against children remains unacceptably high. Many children still lack access to quality education, adequate nutrition, and safe living environments.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities, with increased reports of child hunger, educational disruption, and mental health concerns. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated action across government, civil society, families, and communities.

It demands adequate budgetary allocation, improved service delivery, and strengthened accountability mechanisms.

Most importantly, it requires a cultural shift moving from viewing children's rights as aspirational to recognising them as immediately enforceable entitlements.

As we commemorate National Children's Day, let us move beyond symbolic gestures to substantive commitment. Every sector of society has a role: educators nurturing potential, healthcare workers ensuring wellbeing, social workers providing protection, and policymakers allocating resources justly. Parents and caregivers remain primary duty-bearers, supported by communities and the state. The Constitution's promise is clear: every child matters, and every child's rights matter. Our collective responsibility is ensuring this promise translates from the pages of legislation into the lived reality of South Africa's 19 million children. Their future and our nation's depend on it•

SCAMMING IN SOUTH AFRICA IS NO LONGER A LOCALISED CRIME BUT A NATIONAL EPIDEMIC OF INDUSTRIAL SCALE AND ALARMING EFFICACY

Introduction

Scamming in South Africa has shifted from sporadic acts of deception into a highly coordinated and technologically enabled criminal economy. Once viewed as isolated fraud incidents, scamming has expanded into a nationwide challenge that targets citizens, businesses, public institutions, and financial systems. The scale, sophistication, and speed at which scams now operate present a “systemic threat” to economic stability, institutional integrity, and social cohesion.

Literature Review

Academic and policy literature classifies scamming under cyber-enabled economic crime, referring to crimes that use digital platforms to defraud victims (Levi & Smith, 2021). These crimes thrive where rapid digital adoption outpaces digital literacy and public awareness (Ochara, 2020). South Africa’s socio-economic



landscape characterised by unemployment, inequality, and household debt heightens susceptibility to scams promising relief, access, or opportunity.

Criminology scholars emphasise scamming as a relational crime, where offenders build trust before exploiting it. Williams (2018) describes this as “*manufactured trust*”, rooted in emotional manipulation and impersonation. Victims often internalise shame, leading to significant under-

reporting (Button, Nicholls & Kerr, 2022). International research further notes the role of transnational cybercrime networks trading phishing kits, identity datasets, and laundering services that enable scamming at industrial scale (Holt, 2020).

Current Trends and National Implications

Data from the South African Banking Risk Information Centre (SABRIC, 2023) indicates that digital banking fraud increased by over 25% in the past year, with losses amounting to billions of rands. Scams increasingly target job seekers, pensioners, students, informal traders, SMEs, and large institutions. The longer-term risk lies in the erosion of trust in digital services, institutional processes, and financial systems, which undermines confidence and participation in the formal economy.



Illustrative Recent Scamming Cases in South Africa

a. SIM-Swap and Online Banking Fraud (2019–2024)

Fraudsters used illegally obtained personal information to perform SIM swaps and intercept authentication codes, enabling account takeovers and withdrawals (SABRIC, 2023).

b. WhatsApp “Blessing Circle / Stokvel” Pyramid Schemes (2020–2021)

Digital pyramid schemes promising unusually high returns collapsed rapidly, disproportionately impacting financially distressed households (National Consumer Commission, 2021)

c. NSFAS Allowance and Accommodation Scams (2022–2023)

Fraudsters impersonated housing providers and administrators to divert student funding or charge false deposits, exploiting youth financial vulnerability (SIU &

NSFAS Reports, 2023).

d. Corporate Website Cloning and Fake Supplier Scams (2018–2024)

Syndicates cloned legitimate business websites to issue fraudulent quotations and purchase orders, leading SMEs and institutions to pay for goods never delivered. These scams demonstrated elevated impersonation and procurement fraud sophistication (Hawks Media Statements, 2022–2024).

These examples illustrate that scamming now affects individuals, businesses, supply chains, public procurement, and institutional processes, reinforcing its scale as a national economic and governance challenge.

Structural and Social Drivers
Scamming thrives due to intersecting structural and social factors, including:

a. Economic insecurity and limited income pathways:

Financial pressure increases vulnerability to scams promising quick or guaranteed returns.

b. Uneven digital literacy across communities:

Rapid digital service growth has not been matched with education on online safety, leaving many unable to identify fraudulent messaging.

c. Institutional verification and authentication gaps:

Weak controls in supplier onboarding, identity verification, and transaction authorization create opportunities for impersonation.

d. Limited cyber-investigation capacity within law enforcement:

A lack of specialised digital forensic expertise constrains the state’s ability to track, trace, and prosecute offenders effectively.



e. Social aspirations for upward mobility:

Scammers exploit ambition and hope by framing fraudulent schemes as opportunities for economic progress.

Policy Recommendations

a. National Digital Literacy Programme

Rollout scam-awareness education through schools, workplaces, and community media. *This will build public capacity to detect fraud and reduce susceptibility.*

b. Centralised Fraud Intelligence and Response Hub

Enable real-time coordination between banks, telecoms, regulators, and law enforcement. *This will accelerate detection and disruption of scam networks.*

c. Cyber Forensic Capacity Development

Train SAPS, Hawks, and NPA in digital evidence tracing and cross-border cybercrime cooperation. *This will improve prosecution rates and weaken organised scam syndicates.*

d. Verification Standards for High-Risk Digital Transactions

Require secure identity checks for supplier onboarding and online procurement processes. *This will reduce impersonation and fraudulent vendor activity.*

e. Economic Inclusion and Livelihood Support

Expand youth employment and enterprise development programmes. *This addresses root causes of vulnerability and reduces incentive to engage in or fall for scams.*



f. Confidential Victim Reporting and Support Channels

Establish stigma-free reporting and recovery assistance mechanisms. *This will improve intelligence gathering and strengthen early intervention capacity.*

These measures demonstrate that scamming cannot be addressed by enforcement alone. Because scams exploit **structural vulnerability and emotional trust**, South Africa requires a coordinated national strategy that combines public education, institutional reform, cyber capacity development, and socio-economic empowerment.

Conclusion

Scamming in South Africa has evolved into a **national epidemic** that undermines financial security, institutional credibility, and social trust. A comprehensive and collaborative response, which is combining

prevention, enforcement, regulation, digital capacity-building, and economic support is necessary to safeguard citizens and strengthen the resilience of South Africa's governance and economic systems.

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CREATING STRATEGIC MULTISECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR A DISABILITY- INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

Building a truly disability-inclusive society requires intentional collaboration across all sectors of society. Government, private industry, civil society, educational institutions, and organisations of persons with disabilities each hold unique strengths that, when combined, can drive meaningful and sustainable change. Strategic multisectoral partnerships enable the pooling of resources, knowledge, and expertise to remove systemic barriers, promote equal opportunities, and ensure that people with disabilities can participate fully in social, economic, and political life.

By aligning shared goals—such as accessible infrastructure, inclusive education, employment equity, and supportive community services—these partnerships create a coordinated approach rather than isolated efforts. They encourage innovation, improve service delivery, and strengthen accountability. Most importantly, they ensure that the voices of persons with disabilities are



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centred in decision-making, allowing societies to design inclusive solutions that reflect real needs and lived experiences.

A disability-inclusive society is not the responsibility of a single department or organisation. It is a collective effort that depends on strong partnerships, mutual respect, commitment, and continuous engagement. Through strategic cooperation across all sectors, we can build environments where diversity is valued and every person, regardless of ability, is empowered to thrive

A disability-inclusive society does not happen by chance—it is built

through deliberate cooperation, shared responsibility, and strong partnerships across all sectors. People with disabilities continue to face social, economic, and institutional barriers that limit their participation in everyday life. Addressing these challenges requires more than isolated efforts; it calls for coordinated, strategic multisectoral partnerships that place inclusion at the centre of development.

Why Multisectoral Partnerships Are Essential

No single institution or organisation has the capacity to meet the diverse needs of people with disabilities. Government alone cannot ensure inclusion, and civil society cannot drive systemic change without broader support. By bringing together government departments, private sector companies, educational institutions, civil society organisations, and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), partnerships become a powerful tool for advancing equality and through these collaborations, allow different sectors to combine their strengths •



— | **BOOK REVIEW** | —

Cde Saul Pelle

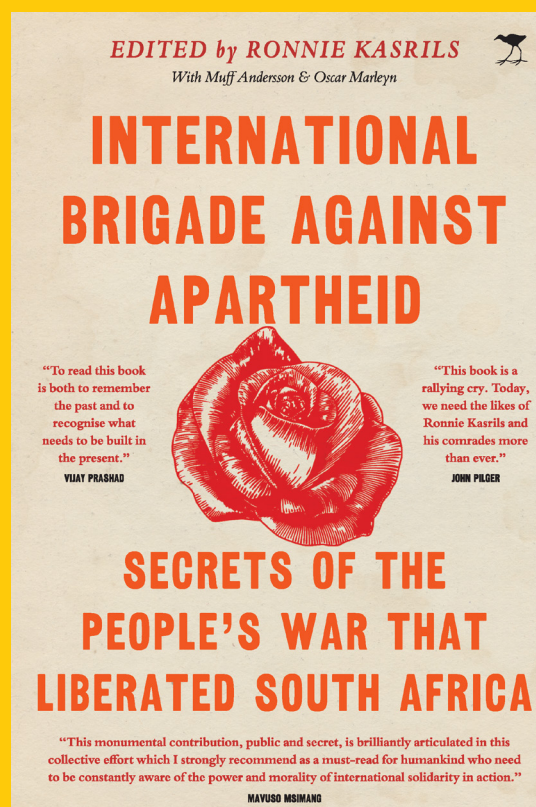
International Brigade Against Apartheid - Secrets of the War that Liberated South Africa

Edited By Ronnie Kasrils

They (the internationalists) acted as couriers, provided safe houses in neighbouring states and within South Africa, helped infiltrate combatants across borders and smuggled tonnes of weapons into the country in the most creative of ways. Driven by the spirit of international solidarity, they were prepared to take huge risks and face great danger.

Ronnie Kasrils, struggle veteran and editor of this extraordinary gem reminds us that from the early years of apartheid in the 1950s and 1960s, internationalists from abroad funnelled funds for the legal defence of those on trial, and smuggled literature for the underground for distribution inside the country.

At various times between 1967 and 1976, the ANC succeeded in smuggling propaganda and war material into the country with the assistance of white supporters from Europe and the US. Many more were willing to offer their skills in communications, the media, engineering and research after 1976. From the mid 1970's, the ANC benefited from an international network that included supporters from Britain, Belgium, Netherlands, France, Italy, Greece, the US and Canada offering assistance with intelligence , reconnaissance





and military engineering. By slow and sometimes unsteady steps, the ANC had established a credible international profile and was regarded as the authentic voice of liberation by millions in South Africa.

The strength of the international solidarity campaign was that it spoke directly to the ordinary citizens and challenged each one singly, and communities collectively to take action. The campaigns offered the citizens numerous points of intervention.

In this riveting book, the internationalists reveal what motivated them as volunteers, not mercenaries: they gained nothing for their endeavours save for the self-esteem in serving a just cause. Against such clandestine involvement, the book includes contributions from key people in the international Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) and its public mobilisation to isolate the apartheid regime.

Walk with me then as I give you a snippet of the clandestine work that some of the internationalists were involved in.

One morning in 1989, three internationalists originally from Canada - Martha Gordon, Sue Marie Godt and Peter Craig - were meeting for the first time to plan what would be several missions from Zimbabwe into South Africa over the next two years, under the command of Muff Anderson and Riaz Saloojee.

Hereto, briefly, is their story in their own words:

“Our mission was to transport and clandestinely bury arms and other materials inside South Africa. Our cover lives were university student, educator and NGO worker. We were in our twenties and thirties. Our ‘legends’ were real; we enjoyed and were committed to our everyday work, while leading a double life. Our aim was not to get caught and to keep our cover stories intact. We made our commitment to MK and the liberation of South Africa without a time limit, without an idea when things might change...

Those years as a unit were turning points for the three of us as it was an honour to be called and to serve the ANC as internationalists, doing dangerous work to support the liberation movement (and South Africa as a whole) in ways it directed. In writing this, we all felt that it might speak to a new generation about not standing on the sidelines of world events, but being a change agent oneself, not doing this alone but as part of a team, part of a movement, part of a vision of a more just and respectful world.”

Dr Tom Lodge, Emeritus Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies in the Department of Politics and Public Administration has this to say about this book:

“In this compelling and moving book, Ronnie Kasrils has reanimated two networks of the brave volunteers who helped constitute the “international brigade” that fought against apartheid between 1960 and 1990, a brigade that

attracted its followers from across four continents. Both with the women and men engaged in active solidarity and those whose contribution was clandestine and linked to the ANC’s armed struggle, their experiences are essential chapters in the narrative of South Africa’s liberation. Ronnie Kasrils was one of the planners engaged in coordinating these solidarity undertakings. As was the case then and now in this volume, he has chosen his collaborators shrewdly and carefully. For many of the people who tell their stories in this volume so vividly were people he recruited and helped to train.

Here his efforts have been richly rewarded. From this collection we learn about the beliefs, traditions and genealogies that helped to constitute this fraternal band and we gain fresh insights into a history that has remained partly hidden. The evocation in the title of an earlier assembly of anti-fascist combatants is deliberate: this was a movement formed by a particular understanding of political obligation and inspired by an optimistic faith that still manages to survive today.

First published by Jacana Media (Pty) Ltd in 2021, this monumental contribution is strongly recommended as a must read for humankind who, according to ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe veteran, Mavuso Msimang, need to be constantly aware of the power and morality of international solidarity in action •