

Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality



SPEECH BY THE MAYOR OF THE ELIAS MOTSOALEDI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY: CLLR. JULIA LATA MATHEBE DURING THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM DIALOGUE

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR,

THE SPEAKER OF COUNCIL

EXCO MEMBERS

CHIEF WHIP & WHIPPERY OF COUNCIL

COUNCILLORS

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS,

RELIGIOUS AND TRADITIONAL LEADERS,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I am honoured to be part of this important occasion, the 16 Days of Activism Dialogue. This dialogue comes at a time when our country was commemorating 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children from 25 November to 10 December every year. However, we believe that the protection of women and children as well as vulnerable groups like senior citizens and people living with disabilities should not be confined to only 16 days of the year. In fact, I am of the view that this should be a 365 days campaign because it is of great importance.

Programme Director, Violence against women and girls, in particular, domestic violence has escalated during the Lockdown phase in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. There has been an alarming increase in multiple forms of violence against women and girls, especially physical, psychological, sexual and economic forms of domestic violence driven by household economic and food insecurity and confined living conditions due to lockdown and social isolation measures. It is clear then that not only is eradicating gender-based violence a moral and human rights imperative, it is also key to us realising our developmental potential as a country. As we begin the 16 Days of Activism campaign on

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Wednesday, 25th let us remember that we all share a common goal: to turn the tide on this scourge.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I am about to conclude, We call on you to join government, civil society organisation and the business sector if we want to win the war against the perpetrators of these heinous crimes.

Programme Director, we must ensure that these laws and acts find practical expression in our daily lives and society at large. Our campaign is emphasising the obligation that all of us have to report cases of abuse, to assist the police and social workers in their investigation and to be available to act as witnesses in court to increase probability of a conviction.

Every woman and girl should live in a home where she is free from the threat of violence. Every girl should be able to attend school without the risk of abuse. Every woman and girl should be free from gender-based violence. Every woman and girl should walk the on the streets without any fear of harassment or attack.

Let us continue to support our law enforcement officers to carry out their duties to their full potential. Let us point out the perpetrators who hide amongst us.

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