

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR THE HONOURABLE KWAZULU NATAL PREMIER, MR. SE MCHUNU
DURING THE INFORMATION SHARING (ANTI RAPE CAMPAIGN)**

Programme Director

EThekweni Mayor, Cllr James Nxumalo

Woman in Media Forum

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honour for me as Premier of KwaZulu-Natal to be invited in this ground-breaking gathering which is dealing with such a touchy yet serious subject that affect the most vulnerable members of our society. This is indeed, an invitation that I could have cleared my diary in order to attend.

Sexual violence is a gross violation of human dignity. It is complex and has a wide impact on society, and victims experience many problems. Sexual violence, commonly referred as rape is a serious public health and human right problem with short and long term consequences on woman's physical, mental and sexual and reproductive health. Whether it occurs in the context of an intimate partnership, within the larger family or community structure or during times of conflict, it is a deeply violating and painful experience for the survivor. Rape is becoming common in our society and the week doesn't pass without media reporting this horrendous incident of rape.

Despite our country having best laws and legislations to counter the gender based violence, and significant increases in reporting of such assaults, the practice of sexual violence still persist at an unacceptable high levels. Woman, girls and every community member have a right to be safe of sexual violence in KwaZulu Natal. It is concerning that the 2013/2014 statistics indicate that our province is leading the country in acts of sexual violence. According to SAPS stats on sexual assaults, there were 11875 cases reported during that period. This is the highest number in the whole country. In practical terms this figure indicate that on average there are 32 rape cases committed in KwaZulu-Natal every day. Considering that this data does not include unreported cases due to family, interventions and other social structures, it means that the situation is far worse than presented by these figures. It is unacceptable that for many rape remains a hidden crime. It is a known fact that reporting figures of rape do not reflect the full picture as violence and abuse remains unreported, hidden behind the closed doors.

Rape is committed overwhelmingly by men and boys, against woman and girls, and sometimes against men and boys. The study conducted in 3 districts of Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal in 2012 by Gender Profile revealed that 27.6% South African men admitted raping a woman. This suggest that the prevalence of rape might be underestimated as a result of high rate of under reporting. Men's involvement in the fight against rape is therefore very critical. The impact of rape is immense, taking into account medical expenses, missed wages, as well as the potential of life changing infections and unwanted pregnancies. It is true that rape have a devastating long term impact, which include stigma, post-traumatic stress, depression and more. It affects every aspect of the victim's life, and it often leaves long term consequences for children and adults. It

is within a multi-factorial understanding that solutions can be found to realize a KwaZulu Natal that is gender based violence free.

It is my pleasure to announce to you our involvement as a Province in the Integrated Anti-Rape Strategic Implementation Plan. This plan is built on a number of efforts by departments to tackle gender based violence. The objective of this plan is to decrease the incidents of sexual violence and encourage reporting. The primary objective of the Anti-Rape campaign is that of raising awareness to communities that rape is a crime and perpetrators will be called to account for their actions.

Provincial Government of KwaZulu-Natal is committed to preventing and responding to sexual violence by:

- Addressing the root causes of sexual violence
- Improving rape prevention and victim protection services
- Supporting legislation against sexual violence, and
- Responding to the health and economic needs of those affected by rape.

It is very much strategic that this campaign is mainly driven by Woman in Media, because many people exonerate themselves of these sexual violence because of the perceived way these incidents are reported. The media has the potential to play a leading role in changing the perceptions about gender based violence. This campaign is a very good attempt to raise the much needed awareness on the packages of services available to address gender based violence, especially rape.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Provincial Government of KwaZulu-Natal and its people I wish this Anti-Rape campaign a huge success. But, I also invite men to join because we all know that Real Men Don't Rape.

I thank you