

President to release Status of Women Report

PRETORIA: President Jacob Zuma will release South Africa's first Status of Women Report, as part of the Women's Day celebrations on Sunday, 9 August.



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The report will be released during the main event at Sasolburg in the Free State.

This year's Women's Month is taking place against the backdrop of the 60th anniversary of the Freedom Charter and the Women's Charter in 2014.

To commemorate these historic events more than 20,000 women spanning across the provinces will participate at a rally in the Free State under the theme: "Women united in moving South Africa forward".

Following the demise of apartheid, South Africa moved towards the advancement of women empowerment and gender parity. This was affirmed at the recent Beijing +20 Country Report, which highlighted South Africa's human rights-based legislative framework.

These include the institutional mechanisms put in place to promote women's human rights, dignity empowerment and gender equality; and the achievements in the representation of women in decision-making structures and processes, both in the public and private sectors.

Acting Cabinet spokesperson, Phumla Williams, highlighted that over the years, great strides have been made to ensure that women enjoy the same rights as their male counterparts in relation to education, employment, property, inheritance and justice.

"Women now enjoy equal rights, as enshrined in the Constitution. South African women have taken their rightful place in Parliament, government, the private sector and civil society," Williams said.

However, she noted that amidst the great achievements, women still face some challenges such as remaining vulnerable to social risks such as violence, abuse, rape, unemployment and poverty.

"Government is aware of the challenges and will continue in its endeavour to protect the democracy and women's rights that were built on the actions of the women of the liberation movement.

"Government has put in place legislation and policies to create an enabling environment for women, and to improve their participation in income-generating activities in the economy."

Williams added that the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment is central to government's efforts to combat poverty and stimulate sustainable development.

During the Month of August, a number of activities aimed at creating awareness and promoting understanding of women issues will be held throughout the country.

Government has encouraged business and civil society to work together to move women forward.

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