

MINISTER NOXOLO KIVIET SPEECH ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERDOMINATIONAL CHURCH WOMEN'S MANYANO , MASIYENI KUMDUMISA MOTHER'S DAY PRAYER HOSTED BY ILIZIWI FM ON THE 27TH APRIL 2024 AT R.V. MTANA MEMORIAL CIRCUIT IN MOTHERWELL AT 15H00

**Programs Manager
Women Ministries
Omama Bonke Bomanyano
Distinguished Guests
Ilizwi FM Listeners**

It is with humbleness, to acknowledge all Women Manyano present from various denominations as I express my appreciation to Ilizwi FM for hosting Masiyeni kuMdumisa Mother's Day Prayer. I want to start by welcoming the honour to be the preferred speaker in presenting the talk on this important event.

It is not the accident of history that this event is hosted on the 27th of April 2024 whilst we are celebrating 30 years of our democracy in South Africa. This month is the Freedom Day Month and Heroes Month simply because many of the heroes and heroines died on this month amongst others Oliver Reginal Tambo , Chris Hani , Solomon Mahlangu and many others. Many leaders who led the struggle in particular women of our country were born on this month. This event is hosted in Port Elizabeth the City that played an important role in the struggle against apartheid. Some women of this City were part of that historical Women's March of 1956 leading the March in particular Lillian Diedricks, Florence Matomela and many others.

This event is really a rare blessing, as it is not too often that we pause to celebrate an event of this nature on the Freedom Day moreso just few

days before the 29 May 2024 General Elections. It brings great joy that the Ilizwi FM has distinguished itself as geared to bring together all women of Nelson Mandela from various denominations for the Masiyeni kuMdumisa Mother's Day Prayer. This is not only important as a Mother's Day prayer, but it comes at a critical time especially as Nelson Mandela has been engulfed by many criminal activities as death and hijackings are the order of the day.

Women have been at the forefront of transformation in South Africa, yet their contributions to social change are often under represented. South Africa has enjoyed much recognition as an exemplary country to political offices. According to Stats SA as far back as 2008 South Africa already achieved then 43 % women representation in the Cabinet and about 33 % in Provincial Legislatures including the appointment of the First female Deputy President in 2005. The representation of women increased from 27,8% in 1994 to 43 % in 2009 and currently stands at 46 %. This puts South Africa as the leading country in the world in terms of women representation in important leadership positions. According to statistics women make up more than 51 % of population of South Africa.

Women did not only play an enormous role in ensuring that South Africa is liberated , women have been in the forefront of all the struggles that were waged against repression and oppression. The government of South Africa recognizing the role of women declared the month of August as Women's month. We still have a role to play as women of the cross in particular in ensuring that we fight against many challenges that are facing women such as rape , verbal abuse , bullying , human trafficking and many more. Others are facing challenges of ensuring that they provide food and better life for their families. The role of women in the apartheid era has paved a way for everyone in the country. Our government has to ensure that women role is acknowledged , women have been occupying strategic positions in politics as Speakers , Premiers , Ministers , and Executive

Mayors and other strategic positions. Since the 1994 breakthrough the Speakership in the parliament has been dominated by women.

South Africa, and through the democratic government after recognizing that women have not been given enough justice when it comes to the issues of equality in terms of job opportunities the 4th Administration established the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities in 2009 and that was celebrated as a major milestone in the quest for emancipation of women and their empowerment. This department is meant to champion the cause of women and ensure alignment amongst government structures and between government and social partners on matters related to the emancipation and development of women.

As we are celebrating today 30th years of our democracy we can proudly say government has managed to empower women in all aspects. The South African government has been striving to ensure that women are visible in all fraternities, however there are bottlenecks. Women have suffered pull down syndrome from other women especially those strategic positions hence this is befitting as we gather here to ensure that we provide prayers, moral, ethical and spiritual support to all women occupying strategic positions not only in politics but also in churches. I am aware that it is not going to be easy to fix those apartheid wounds of decades and decades, but we have to soldier on so that we participate in the mainstream economy. We must express our opinion without fear or favour.

Society through us as women manyano should admire women instead of ill-treating them. We must recall that women are often the corner stone of every society, and we need to salute them. The 1994 breakthrough saw women being introduced in all sectors that were previously deemed as mainly the domain of men. We must fight against the fear that has been

instill by men against women through abuse and gender-based violence. Women these days have no space to enjoy themselves in our society. Women are living in fear not only of criminal elements but also fearing their partners and those in strategic positions as some men have become monsters. Women must engage more on issues of national importance; we must not occupy the back seat we must be in the forefront.

Program Manager today we are all requested to grapple with the concept of empowerment of women regarding the political space for Church Women in Politics in South Africa with a question of ***How do we offer moral, ethical and spiritual support to our women who are representing us in politics?***

This is very important as we all know that women responsibility has been on many occasions reduced to domestic work and family responsibility from far back as before the 1994 breakthrough. Discrimination against women continue in many spheres of our life including in Churches. Many churches still do not accept women leadership till this day, some churches do not even have Women Elders including my own church Presbyterian Church of Africa as many circuits do not have women elders. It is our responsibility for all of us to change that mindset so that women can play the deserved role in all church structures without fear or favour.

It is my assertion that an opportunity has been further created by the struggles we waged as women to ensure women representation in South African politics in local government, provincial legislatures and in parliament. The fight for women 50% representation has yielded great results in all 3 spheres of government. Women are not only represented in politics but also in the Private Sector occupying strategic positions of power. South Africa is leading in the continent with regard women

representation in politics. The question that we have to ask ourselves is whether we offer moral, ethical, and spiritual to all those women who are in strategic positions. We all must answer that question as we have seen both in churches and in politics how women destroy and betray each other at the expense of men. What is the cause of that, that must be answered today by this important gathering.

Milton Berle, states that **"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door."** This proverb speak to the core route of creating your own opportunities is better than waiting for other people to construct opportunities for you.

Interestingly the invitation that was sent to my office, caught my attention with the line that read as follows **" HOW DO WE OFFER MORAL , ETHICAL , AND SIPIRUAL SUPPORT TO OUR WOMEN IN POLITICS IN SOUTH AFRICA"** The reality is that there is no SUPPORT that falls from the sky it is self-created through the practice of doing what we needs to be done as women of manyano. It therefore means that we have firstly to do self-introspection if indeed our hearts and spirits are geared to answer that question. As a member of women's manyano myself I have observed that in many occasions in our churches we are always bogged down by petty squabbles that have nothing to do with what brings us together in church. When people see us wearing these blouses either on Thursdays , Saturdays , and even on Sunday for that matter they have a belief that ***siyakulingena izulu kwaye imithwalo isukile asinazono bengazi ukuba ayingabo bonke abathi nkosi , nkosi abayakulingena izulu.***

Program Manager, we must tell no lies nor claim easy victories as Amica Cabral once said, we know who have changed the situation for the better not only for women but for all South Africans. What is of great concern is that criminals these days know no boundaries as they also target not only

funeral prayers but places of worship. Just three days ago two incidents of funeral prayers in New Brighton, the area listed in crime statistics according to SAPS report in the country mourners were robbed at gun point of all their belongings. This is too much we should not all prayer, but as women we must stand up as we have done in the 1956 March united to lead the campaign and fight against crime. ***O Tata boyisakele.***

South Africa as a young democracy is celebrating 30 years of democracy today, since the first democratic election held in 1994. Whilst the current government can be able to list noticeable achievements there is still work that needs to be done to continue in improving the lives of our people. One of such noticeable strides was the creation of a Women Ministry following the 1994 general election. The social transformation, if it is to result in a real improvement in the quality of life of women, will be attained only if it is underpinned by fundamental economic transformation. The gains of political liberation are unlikely to be felt unless there are considerable changes both in the structure of the South African economy and in its management of the development and transformation agenda.

In the current state of our lives, we need to have women who are determined to break any boundaries of fear to evolve to their destined greatness by being able to see things and set vision and to lead. Success don't just start by itself, and for every successful women, at some point, someone took matters into his own hands and took a leap. I have to remind each one of us that women place has never been in the kitchen as perceived by men , women are not done a favour to occupy leadership position , many women fought in order for of us to enjoy freedom we have achieved

I have to say part of leadership preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today, small steps lead to big things and dreaming about your own

success is one of those first, small steps. All of the planning and work you do every day, no matter how menial it might seem, will be the things that set you up for your future as a leader. It is important for me to mention that women development hold a special place in my heart, and I regard the process as the epitome of natural wealth and power. We should not reduce women with limited capability to cook, clean the house but as capable leaders in all spheres of life.

IN CONCLUSION

We must also go in numbers to vote on the 29th May 2024. ***Niyayazi ukuba nikhutshwe ngubani emakhamandeleni , namhlanje nifumana inkam nkam inyanga nenyanga , ninamanzi nombane uninzi lwenu , niya ezindaweni ezazibekelwe abamhlophe , ningalahli imbo yenu ngophoyiyane.***

Go and vote , and please do the right thing so that we can continue doing what needs to be done for the people of our beautiful country.

We must all pray for our country for this city and for the peaceful elections. The situation of Nelson ,Mandela had to change and also of us gathered here can change that. As we go back to our different places of worship on Thursdays and Saturdays we must be mindful of the sacrifices that have been made by many women such as Winnie Mandela , Albertina Sisulu , Ivy Gcina , Florence Matomela , Lillian Diedricks , Godolozzi , Balfour , Mabhala , Sophie de Bruyn and many others for to be where were are today.

We dare not fail them.

Makubenhalo kude kube ngunaphakade

Enkosii Ndiyabulela