

NFP Debate on 1st NFP Party Motion 2015

Hon Speaker

Hon Members

All Guests

The 2015 Annual Crime Statistics by the South African Police Service show that Kwazulu-Natal is one of the most dangerous provinces to live in. Our province has improved in most crime categories but it is clear that our criminal justice system needs to be tougher on perpetrators of crime.

- KwaZulu-Natal is the country's murder capital, we had 3 810 murders in the last financial year which make up more than 20% of South Africa's total murder rate;
- There were 20 881 cases of aggravated robbery;
- There were 3958 cases of robbery at residential premises
- And there were 2190 cases of carjacking.

This is only an account of the cases that have been reported, the numbers would surely increase if we consider unreported cases. The NFP appreciates initiatives by the provincial department of community safety, such as the Safety Month initiative but from the statistics I have just brought to your attention, it is clear that every month and every single day, needs to be dedicated to safety.

Each year, during the month of December, we see an increase in crimes in our communities and places of business. The crime statistics reveal that in our province, in December last year, 55 murders happened on Christmas Day alone and a further 54 on

New Year's Day. It is important to have a programme of this nature and we should always challenge ourselves to finding ways of making it work better.

It is clear that the department and our police cannot fight crime alone. What we need is a multi-stakeholder approach that will bring together everybody: academics, NGOs, the business sector, religious community and more importantly, the community. We can provide all the policing and every government intervention but if communities do not work with us, these are a waste of time.

The NFP further recognizes that the departments "One Million Voices against Crime and Police killings programme". There is an attack on our police and as the NFP we wish to condemn police murders in the strongest possible terms. But Honorable Members, there are over 10 million people in Kwazulu-Natal. We need to have a programme directed at engaging everyone, not just a million or a select few.

We also need to look at how to make the job of policing more easier. These are tough times to be a police officer and the state needs to make certain that from its side, our police are taken care of. We propose an entire review of the conditions of service and remuneration of police officers so as to create the best possible working environment.

We also need to draw on the broader community to act as reservists and volunteers to assist in offices, with a view of enhancing police visibility in all areas. We appreciate the various engagements the department has had with Community Policing Forums and more needs to be done to strengthen and support these.

Like the department, the NFP is also deeply concerned about the political violence that is expected to ensue towards the 2016 local government elections. We should not be having such discussions 20 years into democracy. But honorable members, the truth is: it starts with us as the elected representatives and leaders of our parties. We need to set the example, speak out and take action against political violence even when such acts are committed by members of our own parties.

We do not have 'no-go zone' areas in South Africa. The situation in Kwamashu and other parts of the province needs to come to an end.

As we enter the festive season, we would like to encourage all people, in every corner of the province, to make safety as priority. Wherever you are, you can plan your part: as schools have closed, parents need to keep their eyes on their children, making sure they are safe, report crime when you see it taking place and cooperate with the police. Together we can make ours a safer province to call home.

Thank you.

Presented by: Hon Vikizitha R Mlotshwa