**SPEAKING NOTES DELIVERED BY POLICE MINISTER GENERAL BHEKI CELE (MP) AT THE OCCASION OF THE RELEASE OF THE ANNUAL CRIME STATISTICS 2019/2020 HOSTED IN PRETORIA, GAUTENG, ON FRIDAY 31 JULY 2020**

Deputy Minister of Police, Hon Cassel Mathale;

All MEC’s in virtual attendance;

Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Police; Ms Tina Joemat Pettersson

Members of the Portfolio Committee on Police

National Commissioner of the SAPS; General Kehla Sitole;

Deputy National Commissioners;

Provincial Commissioners and Divisional Commissioners;

The Statistician General; Mr Risenga Maluleke;

The Secretary Police, Mr Alvin Rapea;

The CEO of PSIRA, Mr Sam Chauke;

Senior Officers;

Heads of Entities;

All Heads of Department;

Members of the Media;

A very good morning to you all.

This morning I address the nation for the third time since 2018 on this pertinent subject of the annual release of crime statistics. This talks directly to our service delivery agreement of **‘Ensuring that the people of South Africa are and feel safe’.**

In 2016 cabinet took a resolution for the quarterly release of crime statistics. It is on that score that the release of the annual crime situation is released a month earlier in July; as opposed to the tradition of many years of releasing the statistics in September. Members of the media, going forward the crime statistics will be released quarterly, and we certainly believe that, the new approach will allow for timeous intervention measures aimed at crime reduction.

The crime statistics are an important link in the value chain of the statistics system, which informs policy direction in the criminal justice system. The involvement of Statistics SA, further ensures the data integrity in the process.

**SLOWING DOWN THE INCREASE OF VIOLENT CRIMES**

Fellow South Africans the crime statistics for 2019/2020 reflects the slowing down of the increase in violent crimes. Indeed we are not where we want to be, however we are pleased with the improvements in most stubborn crime categories.

In contact crimes, particularly **Murder,** we have recorded a trend of halving the case increase in the past 3 years:

-        **In 2017/18 the case difference was 1320**  
-        **In 2018/19 the cases difference was 686**  
-        **In 2019/20 we have recorded a case difference of 303**

Equally, on the **17 community reported crimes** we have recorded a noticeable **decrease of 2.7%** as compared to an increase of 0.7 % last year.

Another crime category worth mentioning is that of Stock theft which recorded an increase in the past three years. Last year we made a commitment to deploy intervention measures in this regard which proved to be yielding positive results, hence **Stock theft has recorded a decrease of 4.2 %.**

I always argue that the same resources that are deployed to fight aggravated robberies must equally be channeled to address stock theft as this is regarded as a serious crime to rural economy.

Members of the media, another important category that has recorded a significant decrease is **property related crimes,**where all crimes under this category indicated a major decrease including **burglary at residential premises which has declined by 6.7%.**

Furthermore **robbery at residential properties has also recorded a decrease of 5.8%.**

The significant reduction in the crimes of fear contributes positively towards police and community relations. When families feel safe in their homes, it builds and enhance confidence in the police and the justice system.

Meanwhile, under the sub categories of aggravated robbery, robbery of **Cash in Transit recorded a decrease of 10,4%** and **bank robberies declined by 100,0%. During the period under review, there were no bank robberies in South Africa.**

However, in the same category, Carjacking and Truck hijacking have recorded an increase of 13, 3% and 1, 7% respectively. Operational interventions have been deployed accordingly to address the growing increase.

**Sexual offences**

Fellow South Africans, this category of crime has terrorized most households and communities as most of these crimes happen behind closed doors and only publicized when the offence has been committed and in most cases when victims of crimes are no more.

Awareness campaigns on Gender Based Violence and Femicide must be intensified; private sector and gender activists’ organizations must work together with government to defeat the scourge and expose perpetrators in this regard.

It is of concern that Educational institutions are becoming hotbeds for sexual violence, 380 cases of rape were reported at either schools, universities, colleges or day care facilities.

Certain categories of sexual offences have recorded a decrease whilst other categories are on an increase. Major General Norman Sekhukhune will elaborate more on this category when he gives the presentation.

**TOP 30 STATIONS**

Ladies and Gentlemen, last year we made a commitment that there cannot be police stations that will be permanently in the TOP 30 if we are indeed serious about halving violent crimes in the next decade.

During the reporting period of 2019/2020, we have experienced significant improvements in about 12 stations which were stubborn over the past years. The dominating provinces in the TOP 30 stations particularly in murder and rape are KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Eastern Cape and Western Cape.

**Western Cape** - The recent crime statistics also show us that specialised policing in targeted areas does produce results. The additional resources of Operation Lockdown and Operation Thunder and the Anti- Gang Unit, in the Western Cape has decreased the murder rate and overall serious crimes in the province.

For the first time in many years **Nyanga Police Station**has recorded a 36,0% decrease in murder. Even last year there was a decrease. We are indeed turning the tide against crime.

**KwaZulu- Natal** (KZN) - Unfortunately the same cannot be said about my home Province. Ladies and Gentlemen the province has recorded the highest number of **murders** out of all the 9 provinces, which increased by 10.6%.

KZN also recorded an increase in sexual offences and trio crimes. Operational interventions are in place to stabilize KZN; including strengthening the resources under Operation Vala in KwaZulu-Natal.

**POLICING AND COVID 19 PANDEMIC**

The COVID 19 pandemic has drastically redefined traditional policing - social distancing is the new normal; effecting an arrest and a deployment at a Community Service Centre suddenly demands a different standard operating procedure.

All men and women in blue in the Republic of South Africa collided with the drastic turn of events and had to immediately adjust whilst focussed on serving and protecting the nation.

This invisible enemy is brutal and it is attacking everyone. In the call of duty during this pandemic the SAPS has lost a total number of 113 police officers whilst 12138 have contracted the virus with 254 hospitalised and 4904 recoveries.

We would like pay our respect and salute the role of our departed members in the fight against crime. We also want to convey our sincere condolences to their families, their children, spouses and colleagues.

COVID 19 has really tempered severely with our spirit of UBUNTU. Today we cannot bury our police members. Many of them could not be afforded the send-off they deserve and this is very painful ladies and gentlemen; but we will continue to soldier on and serve the nation.

Lastly on this subject I would like to further encourage all men and women in blue to continue to serve and protect and hold the South African flag in high esteem.

**THE APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF IPID**

Members of the media, on another subject related to policing, allow me to take this opportunity and convey our full appreciation to parliament and the Portfolio Committee on Police for the finalization of the appointment of the Executive Director for the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID).

**To this end, Ms Jennifer Dikeledi Ntlaseng has been appointed as the Executive Director of IPID** and she is bringing much needed capacity, expertise and skill in the environment. We trust that her appointment will bring about much stability and direction for this entity to conduct its work without fear or favour.

Equally I would like to thank the Acting IPID Executive Director, Mr. Patrick Setshedi and previous Acting IPID Executive Director Mr. Victor Senna in running the department with due diligence and for contributing positively to service delivery.

**FIREARM AMNESTY**

Meanwhile, ladies and gentlemen yesterday Parliament approved the new amnesty period which is scheduled to **commence on the 1st of August 2020**.

The proliferation of illegal firearms remains a major contributor to crime levels in the country. The 2019 Firearms amnesty commenced on the 1st of December 2019 and was meant to run until the end of May 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak; the amnesty period was severely affected and disturbed the SAPS ability to fully and effectively reduce the amount of illegally possessed firearms in circulation.  **In the previous amnesty period, 44 033 firearms and 246 060 rounds of ammunition were surrendered.**Over 19 thousand new applications of expired licenses were received.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen of the media, while businesses, schools, places of worship and many other public spaces were forced to close or scale down operations due to COVID-19.

The same cannot be said for criminal syndicates, rapists, drug cartels, gangsters, high-jackers, murderers and burglars. Hence, the South African Police Service, throughout the pandemic and beyond continues to endeavour to safeguard the country as per our constitutional mandate.

**The National Commissioner General Khehla Sitole and Major General Norman Sekhukhune will give a presentation which will reflect an overview of the 2019/2020 annual crime statistics, in comparison with the same period in the previous financial year being 2018/2019:**

**-End-**

Contact Crimes increased by **0.7%**

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| **Crime Category** | **Figures** | |
| **2018/2019** | **2019/2020** |
| Murder | 3.4% | 1,4% |
| Sexual Offences | 4.6% | 1.7% |
| Attempted Murder | 4.1% | -1.8% |
| Assault to do grievous bodily harm | 2.2% | -2.5% |
| Common Assault | 3.7% | 2.1% |
| Common Robbery | 2.0% | 0,1% |
| Robbery with aggravating circumstances | 1.2 % | 2,8% |

All Sexual Offences increased by **1.7%**

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| **Crime Category** | **Figures** | |
| **2018/2019** | **2019/2020** |
| Rape | 3.9% | 1.7% |
| Sexual Assault | 9.6% | 4.2% |
| Attempted Sexual Offences | 3.9% | -3.3% |
| Contact Sexual Offences | 2.7% | -6.0% |

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| Crime Category | **Figures** | |
| **2018/2019** | **2018/2019** |
| Carjacking | -1.8% | 13.3% |
| Robbery at Residential Premises | 0.8% | -5.8% \* |
| Robbery at Non-Residential Premises | -0.3% | 3.3% |
| Robbery of Cash-In-Transit | -23.1% | -10.4% |
| Bank Robbery | -69.2% | -100% |
| Truck hijacking | -1.7% | 1.7% |

Contact-Related Crimes decreased by **4.2%**

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| **Crime Categories** | **Figures** | |
| **2018/2019** | **2018/2019** |
| Arson | 5.5% | -7.3% |
| Malicious damage to property | 1.4% | -4.1% |

All Property-Related Crimes decreased **5.2%**

Burglary at non-residential and residential premises has decreased.

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| Crime Categories | **Figures** | |
| **2018/2019** | **2018/2019** |
| Burglary at non-residential premises | 0.0% | -2.1% |
| Burglary at residential premises | -3.2% | -6.7% |
| Theft of motor vehicle and motor cycle | -4.6% | -2.9% |
| Theft out or from motor vehicle | -3.2% | -5.5% |
| Stock-theft | 2.9% | -4.2% |

All Other serious crimes decreased by **4.0%**

Commercial Crimes increased by 0.1%

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| **Crime Category** | **Figures** | |
| **2018/2019** | **2018/2019** |
| All theft not mentioned elsewhere | -0.7 | -5.9% |
| Commercial Crime (fraud, scams, corruption etc.) | 14.4% | 0.1% |
| Shoplifting | -3.2% | -0.5% |

Overall the 17 Community reported serious crimes decreased by

**-2.7%**

Crime Detected As a Result of Police Action decreased by **14.5%**

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| **Crime Categories** | **Figures** | |
| **2018/2019** | **2018/2019** |
| Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition | -10.4% | 0.3% |
| Drug-related crime | -28.1% | -26.7% |
| Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs | -3.8% | 13.7% |
| Sexual Offences detected as a result of police action | 19.0% | 20.5%\*\*\* |

The above is a broad overview of the crime statistics presented.