

## **MEDIA STATEMENT: Political Leaders Must Lead By Example In Ending Sexual Harassment In SA**

Issued 14 December 2018

Recent reports alleging sexual harassment against the national spokesperson of the ANC, Mr Pule Mabe, is of grave concern to We Will Speak Out South Africa (WWSOSA). This flies in the face of the commitment of the ruling party made at the recent gender summit against GBV hosted by the President.

This emerges at the same time when another senior leader of the ANC, Mr Marius Fransman in the Western Cape, is being charged by the National Prosecuting Authority for a similar offence which took place about two years ago.

While we appreciate that Mr Mabe is reported to have taken voluntary leave of absence to allow his peers in the party to deal with the matter fairly without any interference we are concerned that this matter must be handled with care. The ANC has not shown serious commitment to deal with one of their own in such instances speedily in the past. The Manana case is still fresh in our minds.

As WWSOSA, we fully support the survivor in this case and remain in solidarity with her. We also note with concern the alarming statement by Youth League leaders in Alexandra alleging that this practice of sexual harassment targeting young women by leaders in the ruling party is rampant. We urge the ANC to investigate this allegation to ensure that all those senior leaders in the party involved in such immoral behaviour are dealt with. This would demonstrate that the party is truly committed to affirm the rights and dignity of women.

We call on other women in the spirit of #MeToo to come forward and report on sexual harassment and abuse within the ruling party to ensure that this matter is dealt with comprehensively.

At the same time, we recognise that such abuse of power is likely to be hidden within other political parties, and we call on all political parties to root out all harassment and abuse within their ranks. As long as our political leaders normalise sexual harassment and abuse of power, our society will never be rid of it.

We will monitor this matter to ensure that justice is served.

### **Issued by WWSOSA (We Will Speak Out South Africa Coalition)**

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***We Will Speak Out South Africa (WWSOSA)** is the South African chapter of a global coalition of Christian-based NGOs, churches and organizations, supported by an alliance of technical*

*partners and individuals, who together commit themselves to see the end of sexual violence across communities around the world.*