



government  
communications

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Department:  
Government Communication and Information System  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## RECONCILIATION DAY KEY MESSAGES

### **BRIEF:**

South Africa will mark National Reconciliation Day on 16 December 2023 to promote social cohesion, healing, unity and nation-building. This year's focus is on the critical role played by South African citizens in advancing democracy and ensuring that their voices are heard and incorporated into daily decisions aimed at improving peoples' lives.

This year's Reconciliation Day will be held under the theme "***Strengthening unity and social cohesion in a healing nation***" and the main event will be held in Vhembe District, Thulamela Municipality in Limpopo.

National Reconciliation Day was adopted at the start of our democracy when it was envisioned that reconciliation, peace and stability would be a defining character of our new democratic dispensation. Each year we have an opportunity to reach out to one another to deal with our past, reconcile and build a new nation.

This vision of a nation reconciled is embedded in our democratic Constitution. In South Africa, we not only commemorate Reconciliation Day but also dedicate the entire month of December to reconciliation.

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
<p><b><i>We have a duty to build a united and cohesive nation.</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On 16 December the nation will celebrate Reconciliation Day to continue our drive to foster greater unity and nation building.</li> <li>• Each year, we have an opportunity to reach out to one another to deal with our past, reconcile and build a new nation.</li> <li>• Our goal as South Africans should be to promote inclusive nation-building and social cohesion.</li> <li>• This generation must continue to work towards a society free from racial, social, economic and class barriers.</li> <li>• It is an opportunity to celebrate how far we have come in building a cohesive and united society.</li> <li>• Reconciliation is also about each person taking the responsibility to fight racism, discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in the country.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Let's reflect on the progress we have made under democracy.</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Africa has made significant progress in transforming from an apartheid state into a democratic one.</li> <li>• The values of human dignity, non-racialism and non-sexism, and the rule of law remain paramount in our nation.</li> <li>• Each citizen has a responsibility to take charge and play an active role in building the South Africa we want.</li> <li>• Our history of division, injustice and suffering should inspire us to build a better and more united nation.</li> <li>• We must strive to move forward and work to build a nation for everyone.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>We are making strides in the fight against GBVF</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We cannot achieve reconciliation as long as the women of our country live in fear of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF).</li> <li>• Cases of gender-based violence have continued during this year and government extends condolences to families and friends of women who have suffered at the hands of men.</li> <li>• All South Africans should give effect to our new laws by reporting acts of violence and abuse against women to the police.</li> <li>• We have begun implementing the National Strategic Plan which serves as a roadmap to realise a South Africa free from Gender-Based Violence and Femicide and it was one of the key decisions of the Presidential Summit.</li> <li>• In 2022, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed into law three pieces of legislation to strengthen the criminal justice system, promote accountability across the state and support survivors.</li> <li>• Furthermore, the number of shelters and care centres for survivors are being increased and adequately capacitated and funded.</li> </ul>

KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING STATEMENTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have begun ensuring greater financial inclusion for women and our target is to ensure that at least 40 per cent of goods and services procured by public entities are sourced from women-owned businesses.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Let us celebrate and support moments that foster nation building and social cohesion</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We should transform our society by broadening the participation of all South Africans in the development of the country.</li> <li>• We must strive for greater social cohesion and nation building.</li> <li>• By working together and harnessing our collective strengths we can build a united and prosperous South Africa.</li> <li>• The year 2023 will live long in the memory of South Africans, as an unprecedented year of breakthroughs and success for South African sport.</li> <li>• While much spotlight may have been on the current Springbok world cup success, 2023 has also been an eventful year on the creative &amp; artistic front.</li> <li>• This year, we were once again reminded of the power of both sport, and creative sector in fostering unity, and social cohesion.</li> <li>• Hence the President has declared the 15<sup>th</sup> of December a public holiday, a day of hope and unity.</li> <li>• Let us continue to utilise these moments remember and celebrate our unity and diversity.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>We are united in fighting racism</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak up when you witness discrimination; interrupt racist talk and make it clear that it has no place in our society.</li> <li>• Changing entrenched perceptions and stereotypes will not be easy but it starts with each one of us.</li> </ul>