

More calls for citizens to "mobilise against crime"

Police Minister Nkosinathi Nhleko has called on all South Africans to join hands with the police in the fight against crime.



Police Minister Nathi Nhleko says South Africans from all communities and walks of life must join in the fight against crime and report known criminals to the SAPS. Image: GCOS

Briefing the media on the achievements of the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) cluster in the first 100 days in office of the current administration, the Nhleko said South Africans cannot afford to be bystanders as crime affects everybody.

"The fight against crime and corruption requires a strong partnership between government and all sectors of society. Crime affects all of us and none of us can afford to be a bystander in our communities," he said.

Nhleko urged South Africans to participate in community safety forums, join neighbourhood watches and report crime whenever it happens.

"Criminals are in the minority. We cannot allow them to hold all of us to ransom. South Africa must unite and act against any form of crime and corruption," he said.

According to crime statistics released by the police, between the 2009 and December last year, there has been a general decrease in serious crimes.

Nhleko said the cluster was focusing on increasing the protection of rights of the most vulnerable in society - women, children and the elderly.

Crime levels falling, overcrowding reduced

"As part of our commitment to support victims of sexual violence, 31 regional courts have been upgraded into sexual offences courts compliant with the new Sexual Offences Courts Model since its inception in August last year," he said.

Nhleko said an additional 10 courtrooms would be upgraded in the latter part of the current financial year. He said the cluster has also continued to work with the stakeholders within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) national task team to respond to crimes based on sexual orientation.

He said a rapid response team had been established to attend to hate crimes against LGBTI persons on an urgent basis. "Through the work of this task team, 21 of the 45 cases on the rapid response records have been finalised," he said.

Nhleko said the cluster has, over the past few years, gone into prisons to address the trial backlog in a bid to reduce overcrowding. He said the number of remand detainees is currently about 41,000 - down from 50,551 in 2010.

He said the cluster was committed to the speedy resolution of cases involving children. "In this regard, Legal Aid SA is currently implementing a programme to actively track children who are awaiting trial so that their matters are finalised as speedily as possible. There are currently about 110 children in custody awaiting finalisation of their cases," he said.

He said this had come down from 868 in 2009.



Overcrowding in SA prisons has been reduced from 50,551 in 2010 to 41,000 so far this year. Many of the prisoners are awaiting trial. Image: [National Digital Repository](#)

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