

STATEMENT OF RAGE: FEMINISTS IN SOUTH AFRICA SPITTING FIRE!

WE ARE NOT AT THE MERCY OF POLITICAL PARTY LEADERS!

27 April 2019

We the undersigned women of South Africa hereby give notice to all politicians from all political parties across the spectrum as the final frenzy and noise of your electioneering forces itself into our lives and space.

We are not your property, your women, your fools and we are most certainly not a bunch of sitting ducks at your mercy.

*[sitting duck Noun **INFORMAL** plural noun: sitting ducks; a person or thing with no protection against an attack or other source of danger]*

Every one of you men, agents and beneficiaries of the patriarchy and leading in every political party are in some form directly responsible for, guilty of and/or complicit and in collusion as the beneficiaries of power within the party political and governmental system. You have and continue to enjoy political and economic privilege that has resulted in your indigestion with over-consumption of power to the point of being drunk on and greedy for more power. Your drive to take power is insatiable. It has and will continue to lead to our lives becoming ever harsher, more insecure and unpredictable.

You men have failed yourselves and you have failed the entire community living within these borders. And you have failed us as women. And it is not as though you failed because you had to do change for us or protect us. Please know and note that we do not need your protection. We expect, demand and will insist and force you to respect, fulfil, protect and advance our rights. This is what all of you claim to be doing - as the ruling party and as the opposition. Your task is to protect our rights. Instead, we are left to pour ourselves into forcing you to recognize these rights and to mobilise some decency to actively protect these rights. But you would have had to let go of your power and privilege if you took this serious. And you are not going to do that.

We have not waited for you to find your conscience. We have been out there pouring our souls into building this democracy and we have, for 25 years since the first elections in 1994, worked to build and make a reality freedom, dignity and equality for all women. We have done this in multiple ways – we have drafted policies and made recommendations on, we have provided technical assistance to all parties, we have offered feedback and guidance, we have protested and resisted and we have created and imagined new ways of shaping the country to be respectful of women's human rights. We have offered ideas and content on policy, institutional, operational and practice changes that could contribute to meaningful change in the lives of ordinary women all over the country.

The daily lives of most ordinary women in this country – both from within and outside of our borders, has continued to worsen. We have, for 25 years been forced to live and wait in hope, to keep acting in good faith that change takes time, that change is a process and not an event and other expressions of our patience, long-suffering and goodwill. We have remained on the frontline of the change process, encouraging, pushing, prodding and cajoling you men political party leaders, hoping for your conscience to awaken, hoping for your integrity to rise so that you can do what you should. We have for 25 years been forced to live in the shadow of your spectacular and dramatic failures, lies, deceit, verbal, physical and emotional violence and the never ending violence of poverty and inequalities. New parties have been established, old foes of women's rights have defected from one party to another and changed colors like chameleons. You are still all patriarchal agents with little to no integrity, stealing from the poor, pretending to be with and for the poor and as though all the shenanigans of the last four years is not enough, you come back again once more to persuade us to mark the spot next to your lying and corrupt faces with an X.

No.

We are not your fools.

Women are not the fools of the men who hold power in the 48 political parties that all jostle to extract our consent, choice, endorsement and agreement to continue to abuse power and destroy any hope of democracy in this country. Your promises are meaningless. Your manifestos are empty words. The day after the elections, we women will be on our own still. Forced to fight our own battles whilst you continue to pay lip service to women's struggles and rights.

We are done.

Go ahead with your election. The lives of women will remain unchanged. We ourselves will be the ones to bring change.

We are hereby serving notice on our readiness to force all 48 of you parties to divest yourselves of your patriarchal power and economic greed.

Women in South Africa will smash patriarchy. Feminists are spitting fire.

The struggle continues on the 9th May.

TO PARTICIPATE CONTACT

Feminists Speak!

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