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POWA Press Statement on the ANC Presidency Spokesperson Zizi Kodwa and Pule Mabe National Spokesperson on rape and sexual harassment allegations respectively.

Regarding the rape accusations made against African National Congress (ANC) Presidency spokesperson Zizi Kodwa and Pule Mabe (ANC) National Spokesperson on sexual harassment allegations, POWA is very disappointed. The disappointment is because POWA takes these allegations seriously considering the current state of crisis that South Africa is in with regard to violence against women and girls. The South African President during the Gender Based Violence Summit that was held in November 2018, and the State of the Nation Address (SONA) February 2019 confirmed that the country is in a crisis with regard to violence against women and girls.

POWA fully supports survivors who speak out against the different forms of abuse. We on this basis demand the law to take its course. We demand that these accusations be taken seriously, proper investigations be taken to ensure that justice is served. Violence against women and girls should not be trivialised, and the law be applied to the letter to protect lives of the vulnerable. The criminal justice system is also challenged to ensure that the laws and sanctions serve their purpose of deterring potential perpetrators of abuse. The fact that the allegations are against prominent members of the ruling party (ANC) who are expected to lead by example, makes this matter a priority as the criminal justice system has to prove that there is equality before the law, the criminal system should not be seen to be favoring the prominent members at the expense of safety for women and children in a democratic country.

POWA urges family members, friends and concerned community members to listen, give support and not be judgmental to survivors who speak out against abuse.

POWA is also disappointed that the party that has ruled the country since 1994 when South Africa attained its democracy still does not have a sexual harassment policy. This questions the party's willingness to effectively deal with issues of violence against women and girls, and set an example to that effect.

For Further assistance and access to psychosocial social services for support please contact POWA at:

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