



EFF STATEMENT ON WOMEN'S DAY

Wednesday, 09 August 2023

On this special occasion of South Africa's Women's Day, the EFF commemorates the strength, resilience, and spirit of our nation's women. We acknowledge the countless contributions women have made to our struggle for freedom and equality.

Women's Day holds deep historical significance, tracing back to August 9, 1956, when thousands of courageous women marched to the Union Buildings in Tshwane, led by fierce activists Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Rahima Moosa, and Sophia Williams-De Bruyn.

Over 20 000 women marched to the administrative capital of South Africa, to present a petition against the pass laws to then apartheid Prime Minister J.G. Strijdom. The march was a powerful display of unity and resistance, with women from different racial and cultural backgrounds participating.

Their powerful protest against the discriminatory pass laws was a pivotal moment in our history, showcasing the strength of unity and determination. However, while this march is now remembered fondly, women are still continuously erased from history. This is particularly evident when it comes to their contributions towards the fight against apartheid and broadly, their work in all sectors.

This reinforces the perception of a male-dominated and power-centric struggle. We recall how Mama Winnie Madikizela Mandela's vital contributions to our liberation struggle were marginalised and ostracised, despite her revolutionary role in sustaining the movement and her sacrificial commitment to our cause.

Additionally, there are many women activists who did not live to see the free South Africa, who gave up their lives for the struggle, such as Dulcie September who was assassinated by the apartheid regime and Annie Silinga who was part of the Defiance Campaign and the Treason Trials.

Even in contemporary history, women's movements across South Africa have boldly challenged and waged war against entrenched patriarchal frameworks. Yet the battle persists with the hard-fought victories of women, in some cases, having come to a standstill, and regrettably, faced regression under the ANC government, led by Cyril Ramaphosa.

This is starkly evident in how Banyana Banyana continue to endure years of discrimination by the South Africa Football Association (SAFA) led by Danny Jordaan, particularly concerning remuneration and sponsorship.

Despite being the current African champions and the first to reach the FIFA World Cup's knockout stage, the patriarchy within SAFA is so inherent that Banyana Banyana are forced to juggle full-time jobs while also playing football.

Last year, SAFA had to be coerced to grant Banyana Banyana bonuses after winning the Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON), and the team had to strike once again this year, to secure assurance of their FIFA-provided bonuses that they have legitimately earned.

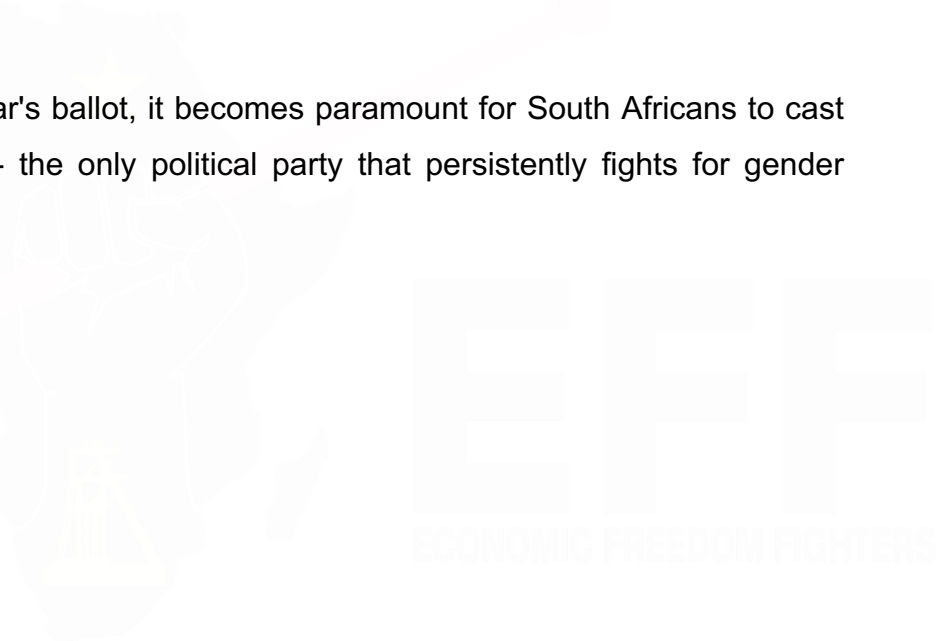
The EFF has remained committed to women's emancipation and have actively worked towards dismantling patriarchal structures. In the spirit of the women of 1956, we continue to fight for equal pay for Banyana Banyana, decriminalisation of sex work, and for justice for the HIV positive black women who were tortured by the ANC Government through forced sterilisation.

Further, we continue in legacy of the women of 1956 - the fight against state brutality against women.

State institutions that are mandated to investigate, prosecute and imprison men who rape, murder and abuse of women are a perpetual failure. In fact, as a result of these failures, the state unleashes secondary brutality against women reporting their violations.

It is these similar conditions, except now under the ANC government, that led to the biggest women's march since 1956. In April 2019, the EFF took to the streets marching to the Constitutional Court demanding that victims and survivors of rape, murder and abuse get justice.

As we approach next year's ballot, it becomes paramount for South Africans to cast their votes for the EFF - the only political party that persistently fights for gender equality.



ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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