Commission on Gender Equality

MEDIA STATEMENT

COMMISSION ON GENDER EQUALITY *AND* SOUTH AFRICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CONDEMN ATTACKS ON WOMEN IN NOORD STREET, JOHANNESBURG TAXI RANK

The Commission on Gender Equality is deeply disturbed and outraged at the violation of women in Noord Street Taxi Rank in Johannesburg. The Sowetan of Monday February 18, 2008 reported on the horrific incident suffered by four women, including reports that the attacks included men poking fingers into one of the women's private parts.

The Commission on Gender Equality and the South African Human Rights Commission will follow-up this matter, investigate and ensure that justice is done. These bodies will also engage in discussions with the South African Police Services to find out what role have the police played in taking up this matter and ensuring that the culprits are brought to book.

The Commission on Gender Equality and South African Human Rights Commission will also hold discussions with Taxi Associations to take up this matter as well as issues of women's safety in general.

We call on the Department of Transport and Safety and Security to ensure that this matter is dealt with the urgency it deserves.

Given the protection of human freedoms and right to dignity which is provided for in our constitution we find these incidents horrendous. This is based on the patriarchal notion that women must be dictated to on how they should dress in public. We call on all those involved, including taxi men to respect the right to women's bodies and their inalienable right to dignity.

Issued by Commission on Gender Equality
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