



Commission for Gender Equality
A society free from gender oppression and inequality

CGE is on the Mend

The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) is appearing before the portfolio committee on Women, Children and Persons with Disability on **Wednesday, 12 May 2010** to account for its performance during the *2007/08 and 2008/09* financial years.

This appearance follows hot on the heels of two bruising, honest and purging encounters with SCOPA on the collapse of financial systems and controls and irregular expenditure within the CGE. The CGE is committed to correct the wrongs of the past and is in the process of pursuing various disciplinary and legal processes based on the findings of the Auditor General's report. In addition the CGE is pursuing an internal capacity building initiative and a turnaround strategy. The 2009/10 audit has recently began and we hope to root out the last remnants of a troubled past through this initiative.

The Acting Chairperson, Commissioner Shozi, said that he is grateful for the work that the AG has and is doing and for the support provided by its offices. The Plenary of Commissioners is also pleased about the way in which the OPP is dealing with the complaints against the CGE. He also said that he wants to tell the public that the CGE is on the mend with well-performing and clear defined roles between management and commissioners and a dynamic programme of action.

The Portfolio committee will no doubt ask hard and difficult questions to the CGE and we welcome a frank and honest discussion on this. We are however confident that the performance of the CGE, which has been obscured by governance and management issues, can finally be revealed. A feat, that is more telling in the context of the past two years in an oppressive and stifling organisational culture. The CGE remains mindful of the ethical and professional responsibility of all of its employees. A performance management system is being put in place together with a compliance driven financial regime.

One of the crucial lessons from this crisis must never be unlearned. That is, good, respectful, solid, inclusive and modest leadership is one the most vital elements of well-functioning public organisations. We have many examples in our country, apart from the CGE, where this has proven to be a well-establish truth in addition to the many research findings that point in the same direction. In the case of Chapter 9 institutions, Parliament, in particular, has a very important duty in recommending who these leaders should be and this should be done in an open, non-petitioning culture...with the interest of the public in mind. Appointments should be properly screened and the necessary integrity and capacity tests should be conducted. If this is a standard practice for most institutions, the requirements to be appointed as Chairpersons of Chapter 9 institutions should be set much higher. The Asmal Review makes a number of recommendations in this regard which the CGE fully supports. Democracies are healthy and robust when their public institutions are healthy, vigorous and independent...all our futures are tied to this dictum.



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The Commission for Gender Equality is established in terms of Section 187 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in order to promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development and attainment of gender equality.