



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

## **Gender and Elections 2009**

### **Sexist Remarks towards the Western Cape Premier**

The Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) notes with regret the sexist statements that are being directed to Western Cape, Premier, Ms Helen Zille. Notwithstanding the fact that we are investigating whether there has been an error of judgement on her part in appointing an all- male cabinet, these considerations can in no way affect her right to enjoy the full human rights guaranteed in the Constitution, including her right to human dignity. We feel that the condemnation of Ms Zille is unacceptable. It is not addressing the issue at hand but also makes false statements about her private life. Similarly, the statements that are being directed to President Jacob Zuma are unfortunate, since they divert attention from the critical issue here, namely gender equality in political governance. A platform that calls for all politicians to work together for the renewal of our values and morals has been laid and this latest tirade of public insults are somewhat disturbing. The CGE calls on all political parties to act in a manner that is responsible and exemplary to the public. Henceforth, parties should move swiftly to condemn inflammatory and despicable statements that are demeaning to others.

We reiterate our call to politicians and political parties to resist any form of mud-slinging as these only serve to divert the attention from service delivery and programmes that seek to address gender imbalances. We must all take a stand against all forms of gender-based violence, including verbal violence, and other forms of abuse directed at women.

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Tel: 011 403 7182

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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*

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