



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

24 September 2026

AL JAMA-AH CONDEMNS THE KILLING OF NINE WOMEN IN EKURHULENI AND CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION AGAINST GBV NATIONWIDE.

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Al Jama-ah extends its deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of the nine women whose bodies have been discovered in Ekurhuleni since July.

Behind every one of these women was a family, a mother, a daughter, a sister, a wife, a friend and a community. They were women with lives, aspirations and people who loved them. Their deaths must never be reduced to another statistic in a country that has become all too familiar with the devastating reality of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF).

While the developments in Ekurhuleni have rightly shocked the nation, Al Jama-ah stresses that GBV is not confined to one province, one city or one community.

The Western Cape is also confronting the persistent reality of gender-based violence, affecting women, children and families across the province. The existence of dedicated provincial GBV programmes, shelters, social workers and community-based interventions demonstrates both the scale of the challenge and the continuing need for a sustained response.

This is therefore not simply an Ekurhuleni crisis. It is a national crisis.





South Africa must confront GBV wherever it occurs, whether that is in Gauteng, the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, the Free State, North West and the Northern Cape.

Al Jama-ah calls on the South African Police Service to leave no stone unturned in identifying and bringing those responsible for these killings to justice. Every bereaved family deserves answers, accountability and justice.

We further urge all those involved in reporting and investigating these cases to handle information with the utmost sensitivity. Families are enduring unimaginable pain, and the dignity of the victims must be respected at every stage. At the same time, information that could compromise ongoing investigations must be carefully protected.

THE FIGHT AGAINST GBV MUST INCLUDE THE FIGHT AGAINST ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

There is another dimension to this crisis that South Africa cannot afford to ignore: the devastating impact of alcohol and substance abuse on individuals, families and communities.

Alcohol and drugs can never excuse violence, and responsibility for an act of violence rests firmly with the person who commits it. However, we cannot ignore the contribution that harmful alcohol consumption and substance abuse can make to environments in which violence, reckless behaviour and abuse become more prevalent.

Government has recognised the relationship between alcohol abuse and GBVF.

For this reason, Al Jama-ah believes that the national response to GBVF must be accompanied by a far more determined and coordinated effort to combat alcohol and substance abuse.

Across South Africa, including communities in the Western Cape, families continue to confront the consequences of violence, substance abuse, criminality and the breakdown of community safety.

In too many communities, illegal taverns operate openly, alcohol is sold without the required licences, and drugs are readily accessible, including to young people.

Families and communities bear the consequences while criminals and unscrupulous operators profit.

Government must act with greater urgency!

Al Jama-ah calls for:

1. stronger enforcement of liquor laws
 2. decisive action against illegal liquor outlets
 3. greater scrutiny of establishments repeatedly associated with violence and criminal activity
 4. intensified efforts to disrupt drug trafficking and hold those who profit from the destruction of communities accountable;
- expanded access to treatment, rehabilitation and support for people battling addiction
1. sustained prevention programmes, particularly targeting young people before substance abuse takes hold of their lives.

Policing is essential, but policing alone will not solve this crisis. South Africa requires a comprehensive approach that combines law enforcement with prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, education and community support.

THE WESTERN CAPE MUST NOT BE LEFT OUT OF THE NATIONAL GBV RESPONSE

Al Jama-ah specifically calls for continued and strengthened attention to GBV in the Western Cape.

The province has established a range of interventions, including GBV Ambassador programmes, social services, victim-support initiatives and shelters for women and children affected by GBV. These interventions are important, but the continued need for such services demonstrates that the fight against GBV remains far from over.



The Western Cape Government has reported that its GBV Ambassador programmes operate in communities across the province and that social development services provide support through shelters, courts, Thuthuzela Care Centres and SAPS victim-friendly facilities.

Al Jama-ah believes that these efforts must be matched by stronger prevention, more effective policing, improved investigations and prosecutions, and greater accountability throughout the criminal justice system.

We cannot allow GBV to become normalised in any part of the Western Cape or anywhere else in South Africa.

Every woman has the right to live free from fear, whether she lives in Khayelitsha or Mitchells Plain, Cape Town or George, Ekurhuleni or Johannesburg, a township, rural community or affluent suburb.

There must be no postcode for justice and no geographical limitation to our outrage at violence against women.

A CALL TO FAITH COMMUNITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Al Jama-ah calls on churches, mosques, temples, traditional leaders, community organisations, residents' associations, Community Policing Forums and civil society organisations to raise their voices and become active partners in confronting this crisis.

We cannot leave the responsibility entirely to government.

Communities must maintain sustained pressure on government to enforce the laws already on our statute books and, where necessary, strengthen the legislative and regulatory framework governing alcohol abuse, illegal liquor outlets and the illicit drug trade.

Faith-based organisations have a particularly important role to play.



Places of worship must be spaces where families can find support, young people can receive guidance, survivors can be directed towards appropriate assistance, and men are challenged to take responsibility for their conduct and treatment of others.

We must also be prepared to have difficult conversations about issues that are too often left unspoken.

MEN MUST BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

Men have a particular responsibility in confronting violence against women.

We must teach our sons that masculinity is not defined by controlling, intimidating or hurting women. It must be grounded in respect, responsibility, dignity and accountability.

We must also be willing to challenge friends, relatives and colleagues when we witness abusive or threatening behaviour.

Silence cannot become a shield for abuse.

When we know that a woman is being abused, we cannot simply look away or dismiss it as a private family matter.

Abuse is not a private matter when someone's safety and life are at risk.

WE CANNOT WAIT FOR ANOTHER FAMILY TO GRIEVE

The nine women who have lost their lives in Ekurhuleni must not be forgotten.

But neither must the countless women across South Africa who continue to experience physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse.

Their suffering must compel us to confront the failures and conditions that allow violence against women to persist.

South Africa needs stronger policing, more effective investigations, successful prosecutions and closer cooperation between the South African Police Service, municipal law enforcement, Social Development, Health, communities and civil society.



We also need an honest and sustained national conversation about what is happening in our communities and why so many families continue to be affected by violence, alcohol abuse and substance abuse.

The national government has formally recognised the gravity of the crisis: in November 2025, Gender-Based Violence and Femicide was classified as a national disaster, requiring strengthened coordination and prevention across government and society.

That recognition must translate into sustained action.

GBV left unchecked can become a pathway to lethal violence.

We cannot continue responding only after another woman has been killed.

Prevention must become as urgent as the response.

Al Jama-ah therefore calls on government, law enforcement agencies, provincial and municipal authorities, faith-based organisations, civil society, community leaders and every resident to stand together and demand meaningful action.

The women of Ekurhuleni deserve justice.

The women of the Western Cape deserve safety.

And women everywhere in South Africa deserve both.

Enough is enough.

Protect women.

Support families.

Confront alcohol and substance abuse.

Strengthen prevention and enforcement.

Support survivors.

Hold perpetrators accountable.

And ensure that every woman, in every province and every community, can live free from violence and fear.

ENDS

Issued by:

Al Jama-ah Political Party



Political platform for all communities

For media inquiries:

Sinazo Mtshengu

0785123186