



SALGA
South African Local Government Association

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Date: 30 October 2015

Media Release

For immediate release

30 September 2015

SALGA Women's Commission National Lekgotla unite women beyond the party line

The SALGA Women's Commission National Lekgotla which is underway at Sibaya Hotel and Conference Centre, Durban, in KwaZulu Natal has demonstrated that women have an ability to unite and set aside their political aspirations for the realization of transformation and equality.

The National Lekgotla is attended by over 400 delegates which includes provincial chapters of the Women's Commission, women structures in local government, Mayors, Councillors, Civil Society Organisations, Private Sector and representatives from National and Provincial government departments,

During the National Lekgotla, various political parties were given an opportunity to convey their messages of support and present their party position on the issue of gender mainstreaming within their political homes.

The National Lekgotla also saw a re-launch of the 50/50 campaign.

SALGA National Executive Member Cllr Pinky Moloi said: "We are re-launching the 50/50 campaign even though it is already a government policy. We are aware that the policy is not being implemented fully. Today, we want to hear political parties recommitting themselves as we move towards 2016 Local Government Elections."

In South Africa, the proportion of women in parliament saw a decline from 43% to 40%, following the May 2014 national general elections. The decline contradicts the 50/50 commitment which calls for equal representation of women in decision making structures as informed by the SADC Gender and Development Protocol.

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As acknowledged by activists, the setback to the 50/50 commitment is dependent on voluntary quotas, which is linked to the electoral fortunes of political parties and this has also proved to be the case in South Africa.

Results of the 2011 Local Government Elections demonstrated a reduction of women representation despite an active call for 50/50 representation in political leadership.

Reading out the 50/50 commitment, SALGA National Commissioner Sandiswa Gomba said: “50/50 representation of men and women in all structures of Local Government 50% quota must be legislated as part of the SALGA constitution”.

said • The decline and regression in women's representation within the South African political landscape following the 2011 Local Government elections and the 2014 national elections.

“To adopt the 50/50 representation of men and women in all structures of Local Government and that the 50% quota must be legislated as part of the SALGA constitution”

.on a great start for its first two-day in Durban with speaker after speaker supported the notion that the fight for gender equity should not only be left to political parties or the ruling party but be embraced by all women from all walks of life.

Gathering under the umbrella theme, “Women in Local Government united in moving South Africa forward: Towards 2016 and Beyond”, among the participants for the three-day National Lekgotla would be Mayors, Councillors, Legislators, South African Political Parties, women movements and activists.

The SALGA Women’s Commission sees it fitting to engage political parties to address the imbalance ahead of the upcoming 2016 Local Government Elections. The 50/50 commitment further guards against losing capable women leaders who are making a difference in the political space.

Different political parties have been identified as key stakeholders for the National Lekgotla and are crucial to the realization of the 50/50 campaign.

The details for the National SALGA Women’s Commission Lekgotla are as follows:

Dates: 29 September – 1 October 2015

Venue: Sibaya Hotel and Conference Centre in KwaZulu Natal

Members of the media who wish to attend the National Lekgotla should RSVP with Sivuyile Mbambato, Email: smbambato@salga.org.za

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Issued by: South African Local Government Association

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