MINISTRY OF POLICE

SPEECH BY THE ACTING MINISTER OF POLICE, MR FIROZ CACHALIA, AT THE RELEASE OF THE SECOND QUARTER CRIME STATISTICS, 20 NOVEMBER 2026, PRETORIA

Deputy Ministers of Police, Mr Cassel Mathale and Dr. Polly Boshielo,
National Commissioner of the South African Police Service, General Masemola,
Director General, Government Communication and Information System, Mr Nedohe,
Director General, Home Affairs: Mr Makhode,
Acting Head of the DPCI, Major General Flynn,
Deputy National Commissioners present,
Provincial Commissioners present and those connected virtually,
Mr Ramaru from the Civilian Secretariat for Police Service,
Representatives from IPID and PSiRA,
Dr Mqolomba, the NPAC Chairperson,
Mr Robert Malungane, from the CPF National Board,
Ms Yandiswa Mpetsheni from Statistics SA,
Major General Thulare Sekhukhune, the SAPS Crime Registrar,
Members of the media,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Good day to you all.

Today, we present the police-recorded crime statistics for the second quarter of the 2026/27 financial year, covering July to September 2026. We do so at a sombre time following the news of recent killings of police members and mass shootings possibly linked to organised crime.

Last week we lost a Station Commander, Lt-Colonel TG Sithole, following a shootout during an operation she was leading in response to a business robbery near Greytown in KwaZulu Natal. Then earlier this week, we lost Sergeant Madikizela, who was killed while part of an operation in Lwandeni, Mthatha in the Eastern Cape. These tragic events highlight the dangers that law-enforcement officials face while trying to tackle crime and keep our communities safe.

I want to again express my condolences to their family members, friends and colleagues and I hope that the perpetrators will swiftly be bought to justice.

The recent news of yet two more mass shootings resulting in a total of 17 people killed hours apart in different parts of the country, consisting of nine people who were murdered in near Atteridgeville in Gauteng and eight people murdered in Sweetwaters KwaZulu Natal. These types of incidents are often linked to organised crime and highlight that we need to keep focused on our efforts to address the networks involved in these heinous acts.

The crime statistics that will be presented here today again show progress in some areas as well as ongoing challenges that we need to confront. They show that determined policing and targeted operations supported by efforts to address the root causes of crime can make a difference. However, they also show with painful clarity, that too many South Africans remain exposed to violence, abuse and criminal intimidation. While we can welcome progress, we need to remain determined to tackle the

ongoing crime challenges we face. Crime statistics are not merely numbers.

Our first duty is to acknowledge these experiences, and our second is to act decisively.

Positive Crime Trends

Indeed, there has been continued progress in important areas. Most violent crime categories continue to show decreases nationally. This includes the categories of murder, sexual offences, serious assaults and armed robberies.

I am pleased to note the decline in murder that started in 2024-25 has continued unabated. This means that between 1 July and 30 September this year, there were over 1 600 fewer murders than the same period last year.

During this quarter, we have also seen notable reductions in armed robberies such as carjacking that declined by 16.8% and truck hijacking that dropped by 27.9%. Robberies of residences and businesses have also continued to decline, both by 7%. Reported sexual offences also continue to decline, but by a far slower rate of 2,7%.

These reductions matter. They reflect that there has indeed been a change in the long-term trend where for 13 years, between 2012 and 2025, most violent crime categories had been increasing.

However, that progress is not universal. While we have seen reductions in violent crime nationally, and across most provinces, there are some provinces that have recorded increases.

Ongoing Challenges

Violent crime, despite this downward trend, remains far too high.

During this quarter, 5,590 murders were recorded, which is still far too high as it means that on average 60 people were murdered per day. Again, this crime is not randomly distributed but takes place in specific hotspots.

For example, the risk of being murdered in the Eastern Cape is the highest followed by the Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal. Again, the risk is the same everywhere in each of these provinces, but in specific localities.

Again, there are notable provincial differences. Around 80% of all gang-related murders and almost 60% of all taxi related murders take place in the Western Cape, while Gauteng records the most robbery related murders.

These figures require a response that is both firm and intelligent. The police must arrest perpetrators, recover weapons, disrupt gangs and bring organised criminals before the courts.

The Need for Prevention

It is well recognised and has been said many times that we cannot rely on policing alone to address our high levels of violent crime. The police can only react to crimes that have already been committed and cannot solve crises rooted in intergroup conflict, alcohol abuse, access to lethal

weapons, family violence, social disorder and neglected public infrastructure.

We must address the root causes as seriously as we confront the criminal act itself. It is for this reason that Cabinet has adopted the Integrated Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy (ICVPS), and promoting and supporting its implementation is part of our crime reduction strategy.

Reducing Alcohol Abuse

First, a good example of practical prevention is confronting the relationship between alcohol abuse and violence. The evidence both in South Africa and globally is unequivocal. The consumption of alcohol reduces inhibition and contributes to a range of negative behaviours that would not occur if people were sober.

During this quarter, the police recorded 8,201 alcohol-related contact crimes. This included 271 murders, 589 attempted murders, 1,483 rapes and 5,858 assaults with intent to cause grievous bodily harm associated with alcohol.

In addition, 235 murders occurred in or around liquor outlets such as shebeens, taverns, pubs, nightclubs and bottle stores.

We must be precise: a lawful liquor outlet is not automatically responsible for every crime in or near its premises, and alcohol does not excuse criminal conduct.

Responsibility lies with each of us to ensure that if we consume alcohol, we do so in moderation and responsibly. But the evidence shows that harmful drinking and poorly regulated environments can create conditions

in which arguments escalate, weapons are produced and lives are more likely to be lost.
Addressing the role that alcohol plays in contributing to our crime rate demands a coordinated response. Law-enforcement will strengthen compliance operations against unlicensed outlets and outlets that violate their licence conditions.

But we also need provincial liquor authorities and municipalities to play their roles. This includes undertaking due diligence prior to issuing licensing, ensuring responsible trading hours and enforcement in high-risk areas.

Strong action will have to be taken where it emerges that there is the sale of alcohol to minors and against outlets that are repeatedly linked to disorder. Prevention also requires reducing harmful alcohol use by providing viable and early interventions for people at risk in partnership with communities, health services, schools, faith-based organisations and the private sector.

Our message is simple: recreation must never become a route to violence. No gathering, no dispute and no night out should end in a family losing a son, daughter, parent or friend.

Reducing firearm related crime

Second, we must confront the availability and criminal use of firearms. Here too, the evidence is clear: the presence of a firearm between people in conflict substantially increases the risk of serious injury or death.

Firearms were used in 2,552 murders during this quarter. That is more than any other recorded instrument. In the Western Cape, firearms were used in 732 murders; in Gauteng, 675; and in KwaZulu-Natal, 560.
A firearm turns a dispute into a death. It allows gangs and criminal groups to intimidate communities. It magnifies the harm caused in robberies, domestic conflict and targeted attacks.

We will therefore intensify efforts to trace and recover illegal firearms, investigate their supply chains, audit firearm controls, and ensure that those who possess or use unlicensed firearms face the full consequences of the law.

We will continue linking recovered firearms to crime scenes through forensic investigation, so that a weapon recovered today can help solve the murders committed yesterday.

Lawful firearm owners also have a responsibility to store weapons securely and comply fully with the law. Every stolen or diverted firearm can become the instrument of another family's grief.

Environmental Design

Third, we must reclaim and manage the spaces where people are most vulnerable. Nearly 3,000 murders in this quarter occurred in public places: streets, open fields, recreational centres, parks, beaches and parking areas. Public places also accounted for 1,547 reported rapes in the analysed sample.

These are not abstract locations. They are the routes people use to get to work, school, transport, shops and home. They are spaces that should belong to communities, not to criminals.

The data also records that eight murders and 103 rape incidents occurred in abandoned or unfinished buildings. While these numbers are smaller than those for streets and residences, each case points to an avoidable risk created when buildings are neglected, unsecured or allowed to become havens for criminal activity.

Safety is not only a policing matter. It is also an infrastructure-management matter. Municipalities, property owners, provincial departments and national government must act together to identify abandoned and unsafe buildings; secure, rehabilitate or lawfully repurpose them; improve lighting; clear overgrown and obstructed areas; maintain public spaces; and ensure safer access to transport hubs and pedestrian routes.

Police patrols are essential, but patrols cannot substitute for well-managed public environments. A dark street, an abandoned building, a broken fence or an unmanaged park can become an opportunity for crime. Safe infrastructure is crime prevention.

Improving Safety for Vulnerable Groups

Fourth, we must protect women, children and families more effectively.
The quarter recorded 9,908 rapes. Of the 9,705 cases in which sex and age could be verified, almost half 4,362 victims were children under the age of 18 while 5,116 were adult women and 227 were adult men.

Of course, the police must improve their response to reports of these types of crimes at police stations, ensure that they protect and respect survivors, strengthen investigations, ensure that dockets are properly prepared, and work with the justice system to hold perpetrators accountable.

Again, the police cannot change the factors that lead to violence being committed against women and children. There must be greater efforts to prevent this violence from occurring in the first place. We all need to take responsibility for challenging the negative attitudes that normalise abuse, such as the misplaced belief that men are superior to women or must use violence to be respected. These harmful attitudes are why a vast majority of murder victims, 86,7% are men.

Conclusion

Fellow South Africans,

The statistics also show that crime is concentrated. Some police stations face disproportionately high levels of contact crime. Delft recorded 1,016 contact-crime cases during the quarter, while Inanda recorded 980. Yet the same data shows that improvement is possible: Mfuleni recorded 222 fewer contact-crime cases than in the previous year, Nyanga 116 fewer, Johannesburg Central 104 fewer, and Khayelitsha 87 fewer.

These reductions should encourage us, but they must not create complacency. Areas with reductions still carry heavy burdens, and places with increases require immediate attention. We will continue to deploy personnel, intelligence, visible policing and specialised resources

according to the actual crime picture, not according to complacency or routine.

Targeted enforcement. We will focus operations on the people, places, times and criminal networks driving violence, firearm offences, kidnappings, extortion and organised robbery.

Meaningful and accountable partnerships. Crime prevention requires coordinated action by police, municipalities, liquor regulators, social-development and health services, schools, community organisations, businesses and residents. Each institution must know its responsibility and be held to it.

Victim-centred justice. Survivors of rape, domestic violence and other serious crimes must receive professional treatment, prompt investigation and meaningful protection. Victims cannot be expected to carry the burden of a system that should serve them.

Prevention through safer communities. We will support measures that reduce alcohol-related harm, remove illegal firearms, maintain public spaces, secure abandoned properties and intervene early where violence is becoming normalised.

Let us be unequivocal: there is no acceptable level of murder, rape, kidnapping or violent assault. The reductions in carjacking and truck hijacking demonstrate that focused action can work. The increases in kidnapping and the continuing scale of violent crime demonstrate that much more must be done.

To every police officer serving with integrity under difficult conditions: your work matters. To every community member who reports crime, provides information and rejects vigilantism: you are strengthening the rule of law.

Our country will not be defined by fear. Through disciplined policing, accountable government, safer environments and communities united against violence, we can reduce crime and restore the freedom of every person to live in safety and dignity.

I thank you.