

## - Media Release -

### For Immediate Release

# Business Against Crime South Africa Comments on Anti-Crime Stakeholder Workshop



Business Against Crime  
South Africa

Friday, 28 March 2008, Johannesburg

Yesterday, an Anti-Crime Stakeholder Workshop was held by Government to mobilize stakeholders, including organized labour, faith-based organizations, gender-based organizations, and civil society.

Business Against Crime South Africa applauds Deputy Minister Mluleki George for his open and frank statements on the alarming levels of violent crime in the country. `The level of violence with which crimes are currently perpetrated has reduced the public's confidence in their own safety, he said.

Siphiwe Nzimande, CEO of Business Against Crime South Africa, said that:

“The first step to addressing a problem is admitting that there is one. We applaud Government for acknowledging the depth and level of this problem, as wholehearted commitment to address it in the immediate term is needed. Business Against Crime South Africa has since 2006 established in conjunction with Government the Step Change Initiative.

For us, a “Step Change” in addressing violent crimes in the country would constitute a substantial reduction in the violent crimes which are eroding the very fabric of our society and terrorizing the public into a constant state of fear. Until we begin seeing a `Step Change' on this front in real terms, Deputy Minister Mluleki George's statement yesterday will continue to ring true. In acknowledging the problem, however, we need statements like these coming from the leadership of our society at all levels. Unless we are all united on the extent of the crisis before us, we will not turn back the plague of crime.”

Deputy Minister Mluleki George is co-chair of the Mobilising Society Working Group, established in conjunction with Business Against Crime South Africa, to promote social crime prevention, raise awareness and address the root causes of crime in the country.

“And while Government has a Constitutional mandate to ensure that citizens, vulnerable groups, travelers and persons within the country are safe, secure and free from the terror of crime, this war cannot be won without the collective resources of the entire country harnessed behind this fight.

Citizens and businesses are urged to report crimes and/or suspicious behaviours, not buy stolen goods, join local neighbourhood policing forums and conduct their daily lives and run their businesses with moral integrity. Youth need positive role models. The ease with which illegal firearms, drugs and alcohol are accessed in communities by minors is a cause for concern, as is the organized crime typified by the theft of Telkom copper cables reported recently.





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We believe that a great number of the violent contact crimes which are perpetrated in communities could be prevented, if the ready markets for these illicit goods were destroyed. The youth are vulnerable, as potential victims of crime, but without adult supervision they also get sucked into the cycle of crime as perpetrators of violence. Petty crimes tend to grow progressively into more serious crimes, if left unchecked. This is a concern. Our schools, our homes, our streets and our businesses are still not safe and the current level of functioning and service delivery within the Criminal Justice System as a whole is not seen as a deterrent to crime.

A negative international and local perception of the country as a destination unsuitable for investment, tourism and trade, is a perception we can reverse with the concerted effort of all South Africans," Nzimande said.

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