

**Address by Mr Sipiwe Nzimande, CEO Of Business Against Crime South Africa
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The Role of Business in The Fight Against Crime

Chairperson, Mr Andile Ncontsa

Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Morning to all of you.

Knowledge Resources Management, thank you for inviting me to share with you and your guests the huge contributions that business is making in support of Government to effectively fight crime. Without the active contribution of civil society and business, Government and its law enforcement agencies will not succeed in the fighting crime.

Business's formal contribution to the fight against crime started back in 1996, when President Nelson Mandela asked business leaders for assistance. Business Leaders responded by forming a section 21 company, Business Against Crime South Africa, a company not for gain, established and funded by Business to support Government efforts in the fight against crime. The founders (Business) and the beneficiaries (Government) had an idea that this company was going to exist for about 12 months. Today, 12 years after establishment, crime remains very high and has become far more complex requiring more concerted efforts to support Government in what has become a national crisis and a national priority no 1.

Business Against Crime is not a lobby group. Our mode of operation involves, employing strategic facilitators and project managers whose role is to identify crime problems, conduct research into the best practices, develop solutions to proof of concept and then transfer the solution to Government for their full-scale implementation and institutionalization. As an example of the work we do, when the central business districts of major cities were experiencing a wave of horrible crimes, we pioneered and introduced the CCTV surveillance technology which in Johannesburg reduced crime by $\geq 70\%$. After this successful pilot implementation that proved the concept, we transferred the program together with the blueprint to the Metropolitan authorities.

The South African levels of crime and trends are uniquely characterised by high levels of violence although the overall levels of reported crime show a reduction. This unfortunate fact is being recognized by leaders in Government and in Business. The murder rate at 19,202 for the year ended 31 March 2007. Whilst this reflects a significant reduction of 40% compared to 1996, it still remains very high by international standards as it is second to Colombia. It is indeed a shame that in our country over 52 people are murdered on average each day. The rates of violent robberies have increased from 75,000 in 1996 to 127,000 in 2007. Other robberies (business, vehicle and house) have more than doubled in the last four years.

The examination of our uniquely violent crime types, reveal many complex sets of causes. Chief amongst these is the decay of good moral values. Effective parental and community guidance is disappearing. We are seeing a decline in the respect for human life and the fear of the law. Offenders have a belief that they are unlikely to be found and arrested. If unlucky to be arrested, offenders believe that they will not be successfully prosecuted and convicted. As a result of acts of corruption and other factors, as many as 80% of crime cases don't reach court. The rates of repeat offending (recidivism) which stands at over 70% illustrate that offenders do not regard their prison terms as real punishment. These days, a prison term is not an effective deterrent to crime.

There are various aggravating causes which include the abuse of alcohol and drugs, easy access to illegal firearms, poverty, high rates of unemployment, high income inequality, lack of skills, and lack of education. All these factors lead our youth to frustration and purposeless lives, placing them at risk of being attracted to crime.

In a meeting between Government and business leaders that took place in August 2006, it was recognised that the previous ten years of contributions were important but had not resulted in a sustainable reduction in crime. It was agreed that crime posed a threat to freedom and our hard won democracy and it was resolved that the fight against crime had to be elevated and made a high priority. Business has never been so united against any threat. The Step Change Initiative, which is a joint Business / Government high-level intervention, was established. The Anti-Crime Leadership Forum (ACLF) made up of six Ministers and nine senior business leaders was formed. To split the efforts into focused high priority areas, targeted working groups were established. These started operating in March 2007.

The 1st working group aims to mobilize members of society to contribute to the fight against crime. Members of society are mobilised to make a contribution rather than being passive defenceless victims. Members of society are encouraged to report suspicious and criminal activities to SAPS. Furthermore, members of society are being asked to stop buying stolen goods and to stop bribing members of SAPS. Those who can afford to do so are encouraged to participate in their local Community Policing Forums.

The 2nd working group focuses on Violent Organised Crime. The three crime types that cause the most feelings of insecurity, house robberies, vehicle hijackings and business robberies, receive targeted priority attention. This is an area where the effective cooperation between the law enforcement agencies and business has had the most impact in advancing the fight against crime.

The work of the Violent Organised Crime (VOC) task team is split further between Government-led interventions and specific business-led actions. The split is based on specific areas of competencies and influence. As part of the Government-led interventions, the SAPS Visible Policing program (sometimes referred to as 'Flood and Flush' operations) is the most visible to members of the general public. This involves road blocks to search for wanted criminals and stolen vehicles and helicopter-aided surveillance in urban areas.

Other Government-led interventions include the national and provincial joint operations centre where intelligence and information is shared between business and the law enforcement agencies leading to the successful arrests of criminals. With the aid of a newly established Hi-Tech centre which analyses crime intelligence and information, the detectives are working hard to improve their crime scene management, whilst the NPA leads the way in priority prosecutions, which involve opposition of bail and the fast-processing of violent organised crime cases to achieve higher prosecution and conviction rates.

By working closely with the law enforcement agencies, we identified a number of areas where only Business could take the lead. These include the leveraging and co-operation between the ±320,000 Private Security Industry officers with the ±160,000 SAPS personnel in order to address violent organised crimes.

We have been wondering how the police were unable to solve certain business robbery cases despite the fact that they were provided with the CCTV footage. Upon closer examination, we discovered that some businesses provided footage that could not be used. As a result of this shortcoming, the industry has developed and adopted common CCTV standards with Business Against Crime South Africa driving this process.

Another area which bothered almost everybody was the brazen attacks on Cash-in-Transit vehicles by the gangs of criminals. A closer look revealed many weaknesses which made these vehicles soft targets. Some vehicles used were not up to scratch; some guards were not properly trained, etc. In response, cash management and Cash-in-Transit standards have been developed and implemented. Government has been asked to turn these standards into regulations.

The large scale theft and robbery of motor vehicles is fuelled by the existence of a market for stolen vehicles. It is a question of time before such markets for stolen goods become a thing of the past. The new technology, i.e. the 'Micro-dotting' of motor vehicles by spraying invisible dots at strategic spots on manufactured vehicles will put an end to this. These micro-dots are unique identifiers of the car. This technology is being embraced by a number of vehicle manufacturers who have introduced it as a standard feature in their new vehicle fleets. If consumers begin to demand this feature more broadly, it is likely to soon become an industry norm.

The 3rd working group focuses on the improvement of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) to enhance the performance of the entire system. The system is made up of six independent Departments which are to be transformed into a high performing system that acts as a deterrent to crime. Whilst this is an area with the greatest operational and capacity challenges, I am convinced that this is another area where we are bringing to bear our vast experience on organizational transformation, change management, processes and systems design. The task team completed the mapping of the entire JCPS system identifying the blockages. The report compiled by Business Against Crime South Africa containing recommendations was approved by the Cabinet in December 2007. Government has recently appointed a Political Champion (a Deputy Minister) and we are ready to assist in getting the ball rolling. In my opinion, here we are on the verge of a major breakthrough. It will, however, take some time to realize the desired results, given that what is proposed is deep systemic change.

I truly believe that our efforts in support of Government are headed in the right direction in terms of strategy. I believe that we shall start to see significant and lasting crime reduction results within the next 12 months.

For Business Against Crime SA to continue, we require a steady flow of funds from our donors. With the continued funding and support by business, I am convinced that we will make a real dent in eradicating the scourge of crime.

Thank you

Siphiwe Nzimande
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