

Domestic Workers Imbizo Notes for Mayor ZRT Gumede on Sunday 27 August 2017

The Honourable Minister wabasebenzi – umama Mildred Olifant,
Isikhulu somnyango waka Labour (Director General) – Thobile Lamadi,
Leadership of Unions,
Councillors,
Senior management from department of labour,
Government entities here,
Abasebenzi,
Sanibonani,

This event was initially planned for May but deliberately moved it to the month of August, which is women's month. We wanted to celebrate women who are domestic workers because they play an important role in our lives. Domestic workers are important to me because I was once a domestic worker. As a young girl after falling pregnant, I was forced out of school and I had to find a job in order to survive.

We have called this Imbizo for domestic workers in order to create a platform to educate and interact with the workers on labour related matters. Domestic workers play an important role in our homes because they clean, cook, care for children, look after elderly family members, and perform other essential tasks for their employers. Despite their important role, they are among the most exploited and abused workers in the world. They often work 14 to 18 hours a day, seven days a week, for wages far below the minimum wage.

Some in the past, use to be locked within their workplace and subject to physical and sexual violence. We also looking at the conditions of those who may be foreigners coming from countries like Zimbabwe and Malawi. Some of them accept less paying jobs which make it difficult for them to survive.

We are a caring government and our role is to find solutions. We want to thank the minister and government officials for being here today. People always accuse us of coming to them during elections but we are here today. We are not campaigning for votes but we are here to deal with issues that continue to affect you.

The minister and officials are here to listen to you. Please speak out, this is your imbizo. Lona umcimbi wethu asivuleleke.

Alibongwe!