



## STATEMENT

### Government must act decisively to prevent gun massacres

*3 February 2023:* The latest gun massacres in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal will not be the last if government again makes empty promises of action.

These same promises were made in July last year when 21 people were shot and killed and 20 injured in 3 separate shootings at taverns in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. Government responded by deploying Crime Intelligence, forensic experts, tactical and organised crime units to track the perpetrators down and hold them responsible.

This isn't enough.

A gun massacre cannot happen without guns. The increasing flood of guns and ammunition into our society mean more gun violence, including gun massacres. Currently, 30 people are shot and killed every day in South Africa.

Says Adèle Kirsten, GFSA's Director, "It is clear that government did not use the 2021 massacres to develop a strategy and plan of action to deal with increasing levels of gun violence and to curb the proliferation of guns."

Reports dribble in that SAPS has recovered a gun at a random roadblock here, and another gun at a stop and search there.

This isn't enough.

Says Kirsten, "To deal with the scale of the problem right now requires a clear strategy, good intelligence and the focus has to shift from not only arresting the criminals but to also recovering and destroying the guns to stop them being used again and again, as well as to stopping guns leaking into criminal hands in the first place."

We need decisive action to stop the epidemic of gun violence in South Africa. Three immediate actions by government can help stop the slaughter:

1. Prioritise the voices of community members living with high levels of gun violence and not a vocal but small minority of gun owners.
2. Table the Firearms Control Amendment Bill in parliament to limit guns and owners, as licensed guns are the biggest source of illegal guns in SA.
3. Establish and resource a specialised firearms unit to:  
Recover and destroy legal and illegal guns and ammunition;  
Tighten controls over legal guns and ammunition to stop leakage into criminal hands.

Fewer guns means a safer South Africa.

*Ends*

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**30 people are shot and killed every day in South Africa.  
Gun Free South Africa is helping build a safer country by reducing gun violence.**