

South Africa: statement on gender equality

World news story

The UK and South Africa share a strong commitment to upholding women's rights and gender equality at home and overseas.



UK Government

Our respective national laws and policy enshrine equality, ensuring that no matter your gender identity or sexual orientation every individual has a right to equal opportunity and a life free from violence and discrimination. Both the UK and South Africa were consistently strong voices in efforts to secure a Global Goal on Gender equality, including objectives to address violence against women and girls and improve sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Our shared commitment to addressing gender-based violence is highlighted this very month through South Africa's Presidential Summit on Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Femicide, hosted by President Ramaphosa at the beginning of November in Pretoria and the Prevention of Sexual Violence in Conflict conference, hosted by the UK at the end of this month during the global 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women. The UK is also pleased to be continuing its partnership with South Africa's Gender Based Violence and Femicide Response Fund.

While much progress has been made since the international community agreed the Global Goals, including Gender Goal 5, it is clear that significant challenges remain until we realise our shared ambition. The COVID-19 pandemic shone a shocking spotlight on the scourge of intimate partner violence around the world, including in the UK and South Africa.

In recent years we have witnessed movements seeking to undermine the right of a woman to make decisions about her body. We will not stand by and watch any rollback of women's rights. This is why, alongside our ongoing work to improve gender equality at home, the UK and South Africa commit to working together to uphold women's rights internationally.

We will strengthen our partnership and use our position in global fora to galvanise progress toward Gender Goal 5, uphold women's rights and create a more equal society for all.

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Published 23 November 2022