

# Powa partners Joko in campaign to help #EndDomesticSilence

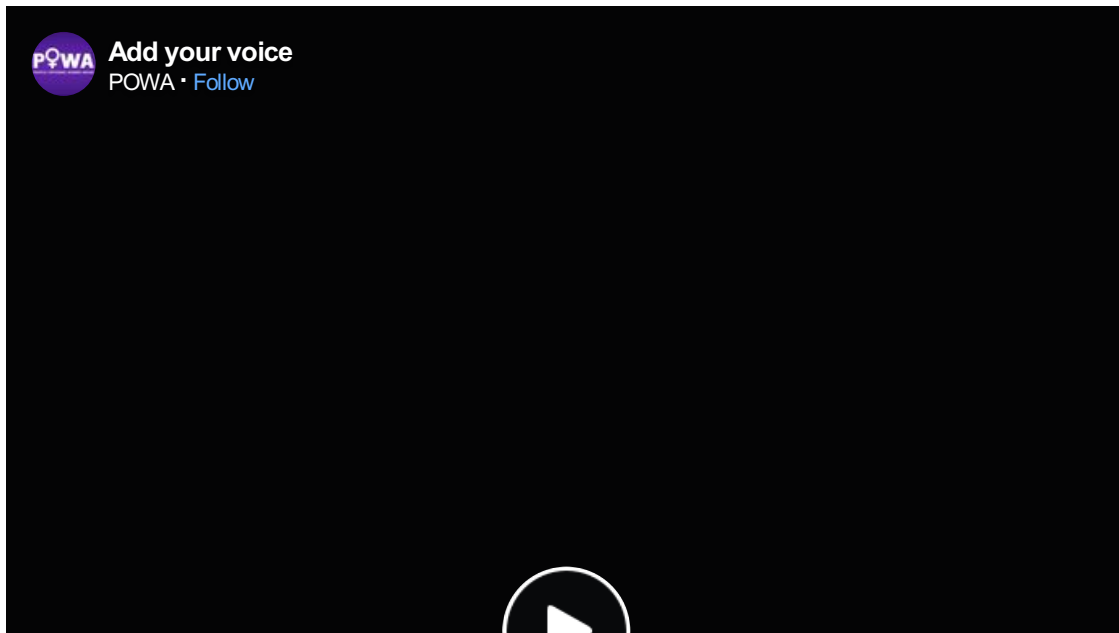
People Opposing Women Abuse (Powa) has partnered with Joko in a campaign calling on South Africans to help #EndDomesticSilence by recording voice notes to the president during the annual 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children, urging the government to prioritise three new bills specifically designed to tackle gender-based violence.



Powa CEO Mary Makgaba has called for these key bills, introduced to parliament in September 2020, to be urgently fast-tracked:

- The Bill to amend the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act. This creates a new offence of sexual intimidation, extends the ambit of the offence of incest, and extends the duty of reporting suspected sexual abuse of a child. It also expands the scope of the National Register for Sex Offenders, including public naming of perpetrators.
- The Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill tightens the granting of bail in cases of GBV and femicide, and expands offences for which minimum sentences must be imposed.
- Proposed amendments to the Domestic Violence Act extend the provisions to those who are engaged, dating, in customary relationships and actual or perceived romantic, intimate, or sexual relationships of any length of time. The definition of “domestic violence” is also extended to protect the elderly from abuse by family members.

“Research data shows us that it takes parliament an average 153 days to pass a bill, with a lengthy 96 days from adoption to assent by the president. But time is not on our side. If ever there was legislation that should be fast-tracked, this is it,” Makgaba stresses.



In August last year, Powa and Joko launched the #EndDomesticSilence initiative to raise awareness about the danger of silence in the context of domestic violence, and to support survivors. “Very few women are empowered to speak about their experiences and so remain silent, largely out of shame or fear. We hope that giving everyone a chance to have their say to #EndDomesticSilence will act as a catalyst for change,” says Unilever’s marketing manager for Joko Sue Marshall.

Recorded voice notes will be collected, collated as a petition and personally delivered to the president.



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“GBV does not discriminate, and we believe the time is now for all South Africans to make themselves heard, adding their voices in support of government efforts to transform the legislative landscape around penalties for perpetrators of domestic violence,” concludes Marshall.

Click [here](#) to find out more and participate in the #EndDomesticSilence campaign.

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