

I Challenge You To Honor The Hands That Help In Your Home For A Fee To Feed Their Own

Delivered on: Monday March 08th 2021

By: 'Me 'Mammusa 'Masekoalane Majoro

Basotho ba-heso, sechaba se
setle sa Thesele, ntumelleng, ka
ho boka likhomo ho Khosi

Rabasotho, le ho 'Ma-rona
mofumahali 'Masenate Seeiso, e
be ke hlonephile le ho lumelisa
sechaba sohle sa Moshoeshoe;
ke sa sihe morao machaba ohle a
phelang ka hare ho naha e na e
ntle ea Ntate.

Letsatsi la kajeno ke le
hloahiloeng ke lefats'e e le
LETSATSI LA MACHABA LA
BASALI. Mme, mohoo oa selemo
sa kajeno oo machaba a

lumellaneng ka ona ke ho
qholotsa tsohle tse ka tlisang
phetoho maphelong a basali
naha ka nngoe.

Ka hona, ntumelleng maapara-
kobo a matle, hore letsatsing la
kajeno, ke QHOLOTSE mosotho
e mong le e mong ka litaba tse
amang basebetsi ba malapeng,
hore bohle “ha re beng pelo-
tlhomohi ha re-e-ea re lebane le
bahale bana babo-rona.

Esteemed ladies and gentlemen,
the plight of the domestic worker
is a personal case for me
because of my direct connection
to those who suffer in the hands
of people they serve. Domestic
workers remain heroines
throughout the expanse of this
great nation. They pay with their
personal dignity and suffer great
humiliation to keep the lights on,
in their homes so their children

can study and redeem their family name from the reproach brought by poverty. Standing at the peak of Thaba-Bosiu, I have a mental picture of strong warriors who fought for the independence of this great nation with strength they got from the nourishment of feeble hands. Considering the domestic workers, coming home every night, wet from drying tears of utter humiliation and abuse they suffered all day from serving

their masters, who see them as machines that bring them comfort for change in their purse is heartbreaking.

Bo-'Me le bo-Ntate, allow me to challenge you to sit with any one of the domestic workers, and you will learn how society has programmed them and how they perceive themselves. As they see it, they have no control over their life; no one respects them; and

they have no rights. This counts as one of the lowest kinds of work around the world. This is a shared view of many in the child domestic trade. Many of them enter the career at a very tender age.

Sometimes, they do not get any food; They wake up at 4:30 a.m. and go to bed after 10 p.m; Their employers harass them for no reason; They never forget to

remind them of their poverty; how they must know their position that they are in their home to work! Some are not allowed to go out of the house; Many of them go for months without seeing their families; Some go for months without pay and they get hit whenever their “masters” are angry and depressed; Many of them get hurt and swell up and are never taken to a doctor; And if this talk is beginning to sound

like a LAMENTATION, please
bear with me, I am carrying a
cross of a woman without a
VOICE.

The REAL truth is, domestic work
remains an essential source of
employment for our Basotho
women who are socio-
economically most
disadvantaged. And millions of
women and girls around the world
too, turn to domestic work as one

of the few options available to them in order to provide for themselves and their families. Instead of guaranteeing their ability to work with dignity and free of violence, governments have systematically denied them key labor protections extended to other workers, and this leaves domestic work as the least regulated of any employment.

And today, I am making an open
clarion call to men and women,
young and old everywhere to add
their voices to make louder the
sound of this clarion for the
VOICELESS!

I am here, strongly raising my
voice that we stop trampling upon
the human rights of domestic
workers, as it is well-known that
this segment of workers is among
the most exploited and abused.

Abuses against women domestic workers, typically take place in private homes and thus hidden from the public eye. And today, I challenge you all to add your voice and say HO LEKANE KA HO SOTLA LE HO HLEKEFETSA BASEBETSI BA LAPENG!

My fellow patriots, the long list of abuses committed by employers includes physical, psychological,

and sexual abuse; with others, its forced confinement in the workplace; non-payment of wages; and excessively long working hours with no rest days.

In the worst situations, women and girls are trapped in situations of forced labor or have been trafficked into forced domestic work in conditions akin to slavery.

We say ENOUGH! Enough because the next victim could be your cousin, your own daughter,

your mother, your sister or YOUR
WIFE! Please Add Your Voice
and let's make the challenge
greater!

Despite efforts made in other
parts of the world, increased
awareness initiatives have
unfortunately not been matched
by concerted government action.
The norm is for governments to
exclude domestic workers from
labor laws altogether, or to

provide weaker, poorly enforced regulations that leave employers enjoying virtual impunity to exert excruciatingly long hours of work for grossly inadequate wages.

So today I ask you to Add Your Voice and make the challenge too great to ignore! Governments' response to abuses against domestic workers have largely been piecemeal and reactive.

Ruri, ho lekane ka tlhekefetso ea
BATHUSI BA LAPENG,
BAROETSANA, BASALI LE BO-
MME BA RONA.

Nevertheless, not all families are
the same, and I applaud those
treating domestic workers like
their own family; showing love,
empathy, support and dignity.

And as I conclude, I would like to
once again reiterate that
DOMESTIC WORKER LIFE
MATTERS; and today's platform
gives me an opportunity to
challenge the government of
Lesotho through the Ministry of
Labour to reform domestic worker
laws to diffuse the systemic
injustice that they live under on a
daily basis.

LIKHOMO BASOTHO.

KHOTSO PULA NALA.