



Defend Our Democracy Appoints New Executive Director

09 June 2025

The Defend Our Democracy Board of Directors is delighted to announce the appointment of Naledi Kuali as DOD's new Executive Director, beginning 5 June 2025.

Naledi brings to Defend Our Democracy extensive experience as a social justice activist – she has spent over 12 years fighting gender-based violence and other social ills in various communities. She has a strong passion for applying her legal expertise in the civil society fraternity in order to help solve the complex societal and governance issues that beset our country. Her passion aligns closely with DOD's mission to understand and implement the drivers of anti-corruption and good governance in various fields.

Her activism career, including a LLB Degree from the University of Witwatersrand (Wits), is distinguished by impactful roles held at organizations such as People Opposed to Women Abuse (POWA) where she served as Acting Executive Director and Legal Manager. Her research focus has included human rights defenders in East and Southern Africa and analysis of the increase in Femicide as experienced in South Africa. She has sat on panels including those appointed by the University of the Witwatersrand's Gender Equity Office and the International Aids Society Conference.

Beyond legal and social activism, she has made meaningful contributions to learning spaces such as the Simon Nkoli Memorial Lecture and held a leadership position at Stanlib Asset and Wealth Management. She has also developed a training manual for GBV champions in Namibia and the Northern Cape focusing on Xu and Khwe communities in their plight for inclusion in responding to incidents of violence in their communities.

As we welcome Naledi, we are confident her vision, expertise and collaborative approach will guide DOD into an exciting new chapter.



The Board would like to thank Dr Rekgotsofetse Chikane for his excellent leadership as Acting Executive Director since outgoing Executive Director Zakirah Vadi's departure in March this year.

We invite all our affiliates and partners to join us in extending a warm welcome to Naledi Kuali as she moves into her new role.

ENDS.

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