



## **ISS Seminar: Making Sense of the Crime Statistics**

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### **Summary Report**

The Crime, Justice and Politics Programme at the Institute for Security studies hosted the Minister of Safety and Security, Mr Charles Nqakula, and senior officials of the SAPS, at a seminar on the release of the crime statistics. Amongst the audience were researchers, academics and civil society organizations working in the area of crime and policing, as well as the media.

The seminar commenced with Assistant Commissioner Chris de Kock and Assistant Commissioner Vuma from the SAPS Crime Information Analysis Centre providing an overview of the 2007/2008 crime statistics. Commissioner Andre Pruis, the Deputy National Commissioner of Operations in the SAPS, thereafter did a presentation on the operations and operational plan of the SAPS and the Justice Crime Prevention and Security cluster.

The question and answer session that followed was very lively, with the commissioners engaging with researchers and the media on the crime situation in the country. Issues that received prominence included the socio-economic causes of crime, the role of communities and community police forums in curbing the crime situation, the possibility of more frequent releases of the crime statistics, and the SAPS operational readiness for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Commissioner Pruis also emphasised the possibility of utilising universities and research organisations on studies dealing with the social causes of crime.

The 4,7 % decrease in the overall crime statistics and the 6,4% decrease in contact crimes has served to create a positive impression for the police. The continuing increase in some of the sub-categories of aggravated robberies, such as house robberies, business robberies and car-hijackings, as well as the increase in the murder of children, however, remain a concern for them.

The Minister then concluded the seminar by highlighting the role of community engagement and unity of effort amongst citizens in the fight against crime. It was also evident that the Minister welcomed the support and assistance of researchers and civil society in curbing the crime situation. He further emphasised the importance of engagement of the kind hosted by the ISS and requested that it be repeated on a regular basis in the future.