

Press Release

For immediate release



SOUTH AFRICAN
INSTITUTE OF
RACE RELATIONS

South Africa's Leading Research and Policy Organisation

www.sairr.org.za

15 February 2013

Media Contact: Lerato Moloi

Tel: 079 882 1968

E-mail: lmoloi@sairr.org.za

Pistorius alleged murder victim is one of 2 500 adult women murdered every year

The South African Institute of Race Relations* says that Reeva Steenkamp, late girlfriend of murder accused Olympian, Oscar Pistorius, is one of approximately 2 500 adult women who are murdered in South Africa every year.

Data published by the Institute reveals that an average of 2 488 adult women have been murdered in South Africa every year over the past six years.

According to the Institute's Lerato Moloi, "Crimes of this nature have seen a slight decline over the past six years. For example, in 2007 there were 2 602 adult women murdered in the country. By 2012 that figure had come down to 2 286."

However, she added that "if data for all violent assaults, rapes, and other sexual assaults against women are taken into account then approximately 200 000 adult women are reported as being attacked in South Africa every year. The real figure is in all probability considerably higher, as anecdotal evidence suggests that reporting rates may be significantly lower than the number of incidents taking place every year."

The Institute said that while data on spousal or partner assaults was difficult to come by, anecdotal evidence also suggests that many women are attacked by people they were in relationships with. "The tragedy of this crime is that it is one of hundreds of similar incidents that play themselves out across South Africa every year. Hopefully the massive media spotlight focused on this one incident will direct attention on the broader problem and prompt the policy initiatives necessary to combat it more effectively. These would range from better-resourced rape and family violence investigators, to courts dedicated to such prosecutions, and better-equipped forensic science resources. However, the question must also be addressed of whether existing policy provisions, such as the Domestic Violence Act and firearms laws aimed at denying access to guns to persons implicated in domestic violence incidents, are being properly implemented by the authorities."

**The South African Institute of Race Relations is a leading policy research group and the oldest think-tank in Africa.*

Ends