

For immediate release

Media contact

Beverly Richards
President, National Council of Women
1784 4980021 | beverlyrichards102@hotmail.com

Domestic violence is a mark of shame, says St. Vincent NCW

(Kingstown, Feb 23, 2020) The National Council of Women of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is very concerned about the upsurge of violence against women and girls and the severity of these types of violence in our country.

This is disheartening and unacceptable. We condemn all forms of violence, and by extent violence committed against our women and children. Too many of our women and children are affected daily and the people are lamenting, we are crying out for it to stop, yet we wonder who is listening, because it happens again and again, and again.

Domestic violence is a global pandemic and a mark of shame on all our societies. VAW is a moral affront to all women and girls and more so, to us all. The continuation of these ills are an obstacle to sustainable development. Our women and girls should be allowed to live free of fear, violence and everyday insecurity. This is clearly a violation of our fundamental human rights.

The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women Article 1&2 states; that violence occurs in various forms, physical by an act of beating, psychological by mental torment, cruelty or verbal abuses. Violence can occur behind closed doors in the home or openly in a public place. Violence also occurs when the state by their own action or inaction allows violence in any form to be committed against women.

Article 4 states: A woman has the right to life, no woman's life must be unlawfully taken away by any one. Every woman must be treated with respect and dignity and her family must be protected from violence. Every woman must be treated promptly in law for any infringement of her rights by impartial and competent court in an expeditious and speedy manner.

Our women and girls must be empowered to protect themselves and to take control of their lives; to seek and receive, professional help in more than one place.

The National Council of Women is making the call for help, for our women, children and men, for all of us, to become more proactive, rather than reactive. Stop the violence. It is maybe time for us to 'mind' our neighbours business. Faith communities and religious leaders should re-examine their roles, and become an active part of the solution to the rise in violence against women. The Government, the Legal Department, must enforce penalties and increase vigilance. Communities and the family must play their part in eliminating this scourge.

Violence has physical, economic, psychological and social costs on survivors. We encourage victims of abuse, physical, psychological and other forms, to speak up and speak out. Men you are not forgotten, you too, need help, so reach out.

The NCW expresses condolences to all families and friends of victims of domestic violence.

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