



16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE

25 NOVEMBER—10 DECEMBER

The Minister for Social Affairs, Community Development and Sports (Designated Minister), Mr Vincent Meriton’s Message

Every year leaders, citizens and advocates come together to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence. The international campaign runs from 25th November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women until the 10th December, the International Human Rights Day.

I call on everyone to stand in unity so that together we can bring an end to gender violence and live in peace. The “UNiTE for Peace: End Gender Based Violence” multi-year campaign is a call of action for every man, woman and child to take up this responsibility. The UNiTE message is a call that has been ringing around the world and it is a message that desperately needs to be spread on the lips, in the hearts and in the action of every citizen of our beautiful nation. Our blessing is that we live in arguably the most beautiful and peaceful country on earth. These are gifts that need to be cherished by everyone and never be taken for granted, lest we let it slip through our fingers forever.

“Vyolans Domestik” i en krim serye nou bezwen anpes li propaze e pa les li bril nou bann aki.

In our efforts to strengthen family relationships and build and sustain security in our homes and communities, Seychelles is working to empower the legal system to end impunity of perpetrators of gender based violence and guarantee justice to survivors. A new law on domestic violence is needed, to ensure that this type of behaviour is recognized as a serious crime which is seen as one of the most common forms of human rights violation in Seychelles. Furthermore, it will clearly spell out the responsibilities of all partners to appropriately respond to these reported cases. In time improved levels of professionalism and effective response by the authorities will build people’s confidence in the justice system and motivate more victims to break the silence and come forward to seek help.

This is a future that is possible. The path towards peace in our relationships, homes, work places and on the streets starts in the family, reinforced in the schools

and strengthened in the community. Society must do everything to prevent a person from being a survivor of violence. Government is working on the necessary legal instruments aimed at ending violence. Escaping violence is not something someone can easily do alone; ending violence requires support of friends, family, police, health professional and the authorities. Everyone deserves the right to peace and dignity. Every child has the inalienable right to live in a home filled with love, understanding and security. Every perpetrator must understand that their behaviour is criminal and will be dealt with strictly by the law. We are a country that values harmony, peace and unity.