



STATEMENT

BY

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OF THE REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Madam Chair, Excellencies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

In line with this year's priority theme of "Ending all forms of violence against women", I would like on behalf of the Seychelles Government to take this opportunity to reaffirm our **total commitment** towards the eradication of this scourge.

Seychelles has ratified without reservation **key** human rights treaties that focus on Violence against Women and Gender Based Violence, one of these being the SADC Gender and Development Protocol, which binds us to the target of halving levels of violence by 2015.

As an expression of our commitment to protect our women and girls, Seychelles has joined the UN Secretary General's multi-year campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women.

As part of regional initiatives to domesticate this initiative, we have also rolled out the Africa UNiTE to End Violence Against Women and Girls campaign, under the national campaign UNiTE for Peace: End Gender Based Violence.

During 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence last year, we also launched the Orange Day campaign – which promotes advocates and members of the public to wear orange on the 25th day of every month to raise awareness about GBV.

Our people is becoming more and more aware, from cleaners to ministers, as they walk the corridors and streets of our islands in orange shoes, holding orange bags, wearing orange shirts in solidarity with the cause to support women of the world who continue to suffer the scourge of domestic violence as we speak.

Domestic violence is currently covered by the Penal Code. However, far too often domestic violence is **not** recognized as assault under these provisions and dealt with appropriate seriousness.

With assistance from UN Women and UNDP, we are in the process of criminalizing domestic violence. It is hoped this new law will provide a comprehensive and holistic legal framework for an integrated response, medium and long-term prevention.

We are making a concerted effort to engage everyone in this battle, including our legal leaders.

In December last year, with the assistance of international and local expertise on human rights, from the OCHR and the CEDAW Committee, we held a sensitization sessions with our judiciary, our police, the Bar Association and other law enforcement officers.

Furthermore we have also recently developed a Gender and Law Manual as a resource kit for members of the judiciary on the application of CEDAW on national laws.

Research carried out in 2006 in Seychelles, shows that as many as 1 in 4 women have experienced some form of moderate physical violence perpetrated by an intimate partner at some point in their life.

Records show that women remain the vast majority of victims of domestic violence, with the Family Tribunal averaging approximately 90% female victims and the Probation Services 80%.

In 2008 Seychelles launched a National Strategy on Domestic Violence and in 2010 we launched a National Plan of Action on Gender Based Violence, which is aligned to the Africa UNiTE objectives and focuses on the provision of integrated services as a major strategy.

We are currently in the throes of developing our first national policy and national plan of action, which is fully aligned to the SADC Gender and Development Protocol and the UNiTE objectives.

Ladies and gentlemen, in line with our national effort to transform our society and promote the **social renaissance** in the **New Seychelles** that our President, Mr. James Michel is spearheading, **there is no place** for drug and alcohol abuse, **there is no place** for child abuse, domestic violence and human trafficking, **there is no place** for violence of any kind, but most of all, **there is no place** for violence against girls, women and mothers.

Our children need better homes and security in their families. Our girls and boys must grow up knowing from **day one** that violence has never been the answer to problem solving and **WE, WOMEN and MOTHERS** of our United Nations, need to know that **WE** have the backing of the law to take **ALL** our perpetrators to task and bring justice to **ALL WOMEN** who continue to suffer in all 4 corners of the world as we speak..

I am confident that together we can **UNITE** the world against GBV and together we will continue the hard work of many pioneers before us who have battled tirelessly to get such a piece of legislation enacted.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your kind attention.