NINTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA
FIRST SESSION (2006-2008)
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

RESOLUTION NO. 72

WHEREAS violence against women and children has been perpetuated for centuries, the twentieth century was marked by a strong and vibrant voice at international levels which lead to its international condemnation;

AND WHEREAS as a result, at the end of the UN Decade for Women, the United Nations Convention against the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was born;

AND WHEREAS the United Nations on December 17, 1999 proclaimed November 25th as the International Day dedicated to raising awareness and renewing condemnation of Violence against Women;

AND WHEREAS Guyana signed and ratified the UN Convention against the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on July 17, 1980 and the Belem do Para convention in 1994, and has been annually observing November 25th for many years;

AND WHEREAS despite global condemnation against violence against women and children and greater public recognition and strengthening of constitutional and legislative frameworks to condemn such violence whether during conflict situations, at social, community, familial and individual levels, the horrific violence being meted out to women and children in our societies continues;

AND WHEREAS the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act is now in its 12th year of implementation and under review for further strengthening and new legislation on Sexual Offences is drafted;

AND WHEREAS the government's policy paper on sexual violence known as "Stamp it Out", has been placed before the nation through country wide consultations with the objective of raising awareness about sexual violence and introducing new legislative provisions addressing sexual violence;

AND WHEREAS new laws recently passed in this 9th Parliament such as the Prevention of Crimes (Amendment) Act 2008, Act No. 11 of 2008, in relation to mandatory supervision for certain acts of violence including domestic violence and paedophilia, and the recently passed Evidence (Amendment) Bill, No. 22 of 2008, will enhance the prosecution of perpetrators of such crimes and give greater protection and support to the victims of violence, especially children;

AND WHEREAS our society is still baffled by the senseless violent murders of women by predominantly male partners, whether past or present;

AND WHEREAS much has been written and researched globally and regionally about this growing level of violence in peace time and in times of civil strife, this social phenomenon demonstrates that there appears to be many complex and profound variables and factors which contribute to its continued presence in modern day societies in this the 21st century.

RESOLVED,

That the members of this National Assembly, comprised of men and women parliamentarians of both sides of the House, condemn in no uncertain terms this continued wave of violence against women and children, and, commit themselves in observance of the International Day for the elimination of Violence against Women, to use their influence within their political parties, within their constituencies and at all fora;

- to condemn such behaviour as socially and culturally unacceptable in our society;
- to assist victims to seek help and to use the laws and support systems available to victims in order to protect the victims and prevent further abuse and murders;
- to consciously develop programmes, for and with men, and more particularly young males, to have greater respect for themselves and women as equals and to learn to address conflict situations in a non-violent manner;

RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly, calls on civil society, not only Women's groups but the private sector, the labour movement and the religious communities, to lend their voices in openly condemning acts of domestic and sexual violence and to develop awareness programmes and support systems to prevent violence as well as assist victims of violence.

Passed by the National Assembly on 11th December, 2008.

CLERK OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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S. E. ISAACS
Clerk of the National Assembly