

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JCC STATEMENT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Kingston, Jamaica: Thursday, April 15, 2021: The Jamaica Chamber of Commerce is warning Jamaicans that if the nation overlooks, tolerates or otherwise diminishes the consequential long-term effects of violence in all its forms - and especially violence directed at its most vulnerable members – then to that extent the society is planting and nurturing the seeds of its own widespread social dysfunction and disintegration.

It is not enough to express shock and disgust at viral episodes of child abuse, of elder abuse or of horrendous violence against women, as if those outrages that are at times graphically replayed across the news media are so unusual. There is ample evidence that it is not and that in many cases such abusive behaviours are handed down across generations.

The solution, in our view, is not simply to introduce new legislation aimed at sanctioning such abuses. In many cases the institutions of government are only able to intervene reactively. What seems inarguable is that individuals, supported by the nation's social infrastructure, proactively come to the realization that conflict resolution must be rooted in a system of shared values including respect for all by all. At the level of the individual, the family and the community, there is more than ample evidence that all too often this mutual respect is sadly lacking.

What is also clear, is that such a fundamental lack of respect that accommodates violence and other abuse, transcends all social and economic boundaries. It resides in the ranks of the rich and poor, educated and illiterate, professional and unskilled – and similarly its solution requires both urgent and ongoing interventions by both the formal and informal institutions that are able to influence our citizenry. Our schools, churches, workplaces and indeed all the other institutions that constitute Jamaica's social fabric, must acknowledge and act on this imperative with conviction if we are to create a society that is just for all.

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