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News Release

For Immediate Release

Death Does Its Part

With the latest killing of Tenile Cupid, a 23-year-old mother, allegedly at the hands of “a close relative,” we must ask ourselves what is really wrong here? Our hearts break every time we wake up to a story like this because we say to ourselves, *it could have been someone I know*. The reality is that she *is* someone that someone knows – Tenile was a neighbor, a daughter, a niece, a friend, a cousin, a mother...

Why is domestic violence so rampant in our country? Is it the abuse of alcohol? The perceived shame of rejection? Stunted emotional intelligence? The widespread “gangsta nah taking that” attitude? The objectification and dehumanization of women? How do all the bills, laws, offices, and hotlines in place to assist with domestic violence help when so many women still end up dead?

Many victimizers and even their victims have missed important life lessons such as how to deal with rejection, how to value yourself, and how to be resilient in times of adversity. Many, many men have failed to be the father, husband, brother, boyfriend, friend that they are supposed to be to our women and children.

This lack of personal development needs examination and intervention at early stages – within their family units or during primary and secondary education – or matters such as a “parting of ways” will continue to end in death for too many women at the hands of emotionally delicate and/or unstable men who have never learned to navigate psychosocial crises.

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We need proactive services that engage people wherever they are and encourage them to learn healthier ways to understand and manage difficult emotions long before they reach the point of no return. As Tenile Cupid's grandfather said very matter-of-factly, "Men need to learn to keep their hands by their side...men need to respect women's decisions."

It is every individual's choice to empower women to not only fight back, get out, or stay alive but also to make better decisions about the people we keep in our circles. Likewise, we must continue to raise our collective voices to bring attention to the demon of domestic violence and support efforts to educate citizens – including perpetrators – to break the cycle of violence against women which is increasingly ending in lives lost, families broken, and lifetime scars.

End

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CEDAW Committee of Trinidad and Tobago (CCoTT) is a volunteer non-governmental organization focused on advocacy and public awareness on and for the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Our mission is to ensure the Convention mandates are upheld, and the recommendations highlighted in the Closing Observations are implemented in the context of Trinidad and Tobago. CCoTT strives to cultivate a vibrant community that will support, strengthen, and guide the development of frameworks as a critical cog in the advocacy wheel. Through this, CCoTT promotes the essential tenets of the convention and stays engaged with communities in a manner that adds value and turns actions into effective, sustainable development.

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