

REPUBLIC OF NAURU
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND FAMILY PROTECTION BILL 2017
SECOND READING SPEECH
Honourable Charmaine Scotty MP
21 March 2017

Mr. Speaker Sir,

It is a great honour for me to be a Minister in this House introducing today a Bill for the *Domestic Violence and Family Protection Act 2017*.

Mr Speaker, the 8th of March is designated as the international women's day and it is only fitting that this Bill, which is a modern and far-reaching legislation geared at strengthening the moral and social fabric of society is before the House. It is a time to be bold for change.

Domestic violence occurs in all household types, across all income groups. Our government has been relentless in its efforts to make sure that people are protected from domestic violence and to make sure that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. In most cases it is women and children who are the victims of domestic violence however men, too, can be victims of domestic violence.

This Bill when it becomes law will make comprehensive provision for issues related to the rights, protection and welfare of the more vulnerable members of society. It addresses the protection of life, the prevention of further injuries as well the issue of third party intervention.

The primary objective of the Bill is to seek to ensure that the courts identify and protect the person most in need of protection. This Bill requires courts to consider the veracity of each protection order application and to act to protect that person most at risk of harm.

In a country as small and as communal as ours, third party intervention in domestic issues is a given. However good the intentions of the third party, it does tend to exacerbate the problems instead of resolving them and as such, this type of intervention is also clearly addressed in this Bill.

Mr Speaker, the support of our frontline police officers is critical. Police will have the power to issue safety orders. This will provide immediate protection to victims of domestic violence and will improve police responses.

Our message as a government is very clear: we will not tolerate domestic violence. We will not tolerate breaches of safety and protection orders. We will not tolerate the non-performance of duties and responsibilities of public officers under this law.

To sum up, there is zero tolerance for violence anywhere be it in the homes and in the work environment and in our everyday social environment.

The explanatory memorandum accompanying the Bill explains this Bill in more detail.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to the House.