

PRESS RELEASE

The Ministry of Public Security fully endorses the 'Voices Against Violence National Candlelight Vigil' scheduled for World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10, and applauds the twenty plus organizations that are partnering to make it possible. Guyana is small enough for this vigil to be eminently doable, especially given the significance and effect of this national scourge.

Moreover, Guyana's history teaches that differences – whether political, ethnic, religious, gender, or sexuality - are never obstacles in the face of peoples' resolve.

Like the vigil partners, this Ministry also recognizes the need for communities to bridge all divides as a critical step to create positive change. This vigil will foster community collaboration, focus on saving lives and preventing harm, and foster the process of societal transformation. The Ministry believes that this vigil can be another step in redressing violence in all its manifestations – human-trafficking, suicide, drug and alcohol addiction, domestic, gender and child abuse, rape, incest, teenage pregnancy, road carnage, dysfunctional relationships, neglect of the elderly, abuse of the mentally and physically challenged and inter-personal violence. It can

also lead to the understanding that empowerment of the individual is a function of communities; and, thus, help to encourage communities becoming more self-reliant in seeking to create a safe environment. When communities are safe then the nation becomes safe.

Currently the Caribbean Voice, Golden Om Dharmic Youth, Save Abee Foundation, Orchid Foundation, Anna Catherina Islamic Complex, NJASM Humanitarian Mission, Art of Living (Guyana), Nirvana Humanitarian Foundation, Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination (SASOD), Imagine Nation Foundation, GIVE Foundation, Monique's Helping Hands, Guyana Women's Roundtable, Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association (GRPA), Crossroad Suicide & Mental Health Awareness Services, Galaxy 21 Communications, Team MMR, Guyana Divya Jyoti Association, Seven Days Adventist of Guyana, Berbice Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Nicosia Sisters, East Canje Humanitarian Society and Miss Universe Guyana are the organizations coordinating this vigil.

The Ministry of Public Security urges all communities across Guyana to unite and organize vigils on September 10th and turn out in large numbers to start the process of tackling violence. We appeal to religious institutions, sports clubs, youth and women's groups, political and cultural organizations, professional and business entities and all individuals to make Voices Against Violence a truly national

effort. The Ministry also hopes that other NGOs will become involved.

We appeal to local and community leaders, businessmen and others with influence to help bring this off by ensuring that a vigil is organized in every community.

If anyone can spearhead a vigil, or knows of an individual or entity, that can be instrumental in organizing vigils please touch base with the organizers. Call Bibi at 621-6111 or 223-2637, Pandit Deodat at 627-4432, Keshni Rooplall at 697-9968, Nazim S Hussain at 644-1152, Dolly Singh at 266-5617. Send email to bibiahamad1@hotmail.com, keshni.rooplall@yahoo.com, deodatpersaud25@yahoo.com or caribvoice@aol.com. For additional information check out <http://www.caribvoice.org/vigil.html>.

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY
AUGUST 12, 2016