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LETTERS

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TOMORROW marks the end of the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children (GBV) campaign, coinciding with International Human Rights Day proclaimed by the UN.

International Human Rights Day continues the rallying cry of the 16-Days campaign by emphasising that abuse is a violation of human rights. Observing International Human Rights Day is to heighten efforts to end the heinous crimes against women and children. Our culture of human rights is in tatters, so much so that even those working daily to end the scourge of women and child abuse are left wondering if there ever would be

Financial independence opens door for women, children to escape abuse

a day when we put these violent acts behind us. It is our collective hope that they never reach a point where they give up. And, for them to keep on fighting for the powerless, they require the support of all in society.

Relegating crimes against women and children as merely a crime like any other is to be complicit in acts that place the lives of the vulnerable at stake. It seeks to suppress their voices so that their cries should not escape the walls of their homes into wider society. It is a crime that should meet

the full glare of society. The wilful acts of brutality that silence women and children must be met with equally wilful measures by communities and the law. It cannot be that cruel men continue to enjoy the protection of society while women and children are subjected to vicious acts.

One of the ways of making sure that women are freed from the shackles of abuse is to enable them to be financially independent. Some men believe women should be their punching bags because they support them

financially. Thus, the Women in Construction Summit held last month by the Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation, Lindiwe Sisulu, was aimed at allowing broader participation of women in these projects.

Minister Sisulu noted that significant progress has been made, but there are still more women who have been left behind. Human rights should be promoted through creating opportunities for them to build their lives and that of their families.

A society silent on human rights abuses, and especially women and children, is a hopeless one.

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