

Campaign for Free Expression NPC
Reg: 2021/582081/08
064 673 9874 or 071 546 7435
info@freeexpression.org.za
www.freeexpression.co.za

**Campaign
for Free
Expression**

#BreakTheSilence

For the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, a focus on those who cannot speak out or whose voices are not heard.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

25 NOVEMBER 2021

The Campaign for Free Expression (CFE) is a new non-profit organisation dedicated to enabling free expression across Southern Africa and protecting those who speak out. During the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), we would like to shine a light on the many survivors of GBV whose voices are muffled and encourage them to reach out and seek help or support from organisations aimed at assisting and giving voice to victims of gender-based violence.

The 16 Days of Activism which runs annually from 25 November to 10 December and is a national campaign that raises awareness of the far-reaching negative impact that violence and abuse have on women, children and society.

The 2019 Global Homicide Report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), ranked South Africa among the top five countries with the highest femicide rates. This has since been exacerbated due to Covid-19. Amnesty International's report, *Treated like furniture: Gender-based violence and Covid-19 response in Southern Africa* found that during the Covid-19 lockdown, some homes became enclaves of cruelty, rape, and violence for women and girls trapped with abusive family members with nowhere to report or escape the danger.

Board of Directors: Prof Tawana Kupe (Director) Advocate Carol Steinberg (Director) Adrian Basson (Director) Dr. Ismail Mohamed (Director) Anton Harber (Executive Director)

This has become the reality for most women in South Africa and although GBV is a constant occurrence, the start of 16 Days of Activism is a reminder that more needs to be done to tackle this issue. As CFE, our concerns are around what impedes women from speaking out when they are the targets of violence and abuse and what can we do to ensure these voices are heard – not just during these 16 days, but every day of the year. By answering these questions, we will have taken significant steps towards confronting GBV.

We aim to do this through our #BreakTheSilence campaign that is focused on encouraging those who have been silenced to use their voice and enabling them to speak out. If we ensure that they can speak and be heard, individually or collectively, then they will have empowered themselves, and we will have gone some way to helping curb GBV.

To speak out openly and freely is to be fully human and empowered to tackle whatever issue you want to address and, as CFE, our mandate is to defend your right to express your views.

#BreakTheSilence is an ongoing effort to encourage the community, society and those who are unable to speak out, to ensure they can voice their views, opinions, demands, likes and dislikes loudly and safely but also responsibly. We advocate for whistleblowers, the unemployed, the illiterate, victims of violence and crime and those who are marginalised because of race, gender, sexual orientation or any other factors.

The #BreakTheSilence campaign encourages you to:

- Speak out and report incidents where you are a victim of threatening or silencing or a witness to behaviour that you believe is violent or abusive.
- Contact GBV organisations for free counselling and support if you are a victim of GBV.
- Support the right to be heard while also not infringing on the rights of others.

****The Campaign for Free Expression (CFE) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to protecting and expanding the right to free expression for ALL, and enabling EVERYONE to exercise this right to the full, whether it by speaking out, by protesting, by revealing**

information, by blowing the whistle on wrong-doing, by arguing, debating, writing, painting, composing or just by shouting out an opinion.

Phone: Anton Harber (Executive Director) 0833039497

Email: anton@harber.co.za / info@freeexpression.org.za

Website: <https://freeexpression.org.za/>

Twitter: [_Freeexpression](#)

Facebook: Campaign for Free Expression