The EFF joins the international community in marking the 16 days of activism against the abuse of women and the girl child. The 16 days campaign begins today, 25 November and will last till 10 December.

In our own context in South Africa, more than any country in the world, we need focus on the phenomenon of femicide, rape, sexual harassment, misogyny, and patriarchy in general. South Africa is fundamentally a woman hating society, where a long, cold, heartless, and permanent war against women, their bodies and their souls has been declared. To be a woman in our country is to be in a permanent state of abuse, sexual humiliation, danger of being raped, abducted and killed by both those close to you and strangers.

Our workplaces remain woman hating spaces where men earn more than women for doing the same job. In business, women are asked to exchange sex for deals and opportunities. In religious formations, they are treated as inferior beings, subject to traditions and cultures that mark them out for servitude. In rural communities, women are not allowed to own land or inherit property, simply because they are women.

Our criminal justice system is a gigantic bureaucratic nightmare that adds to the limited access to justice for victims of gender based violence. Many reported cases of rape and other sexual crimes are not attended to by the police; this accounts for the despondency in many more others not being reported.
Many families harbor perpetrators of sexual crimes; they actively discourage reporting of men who rape children, abuse wives and sexually harass women. The family space is the most reactionary and most complicit to gender based violence.

We call on all of society to join in the different campaigns initiated by civil society to raise awareness on all these issues. Most importantly, we call on radical direct forms of activism that go beyond workshops and talkshops.

Until our society is a safe place for all women and girl children, we must never rest.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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