# The United Nations International Day of the Girl Child:

# The Notable Safety and Security Address:

## Protocol/Greeting:

I am highly honoured to be here today to present a talk on this topical issue of safety and security of the Girl Child. I was chosen by my Commissioner of Police, CP. Imohimi Edgal, to represent him because 'I'm involved'. The Girl Child is an endangered species. The danger they (we) face, starts from the day of birth until death. Invariably, there is no age limit or age bracket for the Girl Child.

What is Safety? It is the condition of being safe from undergoing or causing hurt, injury or loss.

What is Security? It is the state of being secure, free from danger, fear and anxiety.

Who is a Girl Child? Simply put, a young female child.

Therefore, the safety and security of a girl child is when a young female child is in a state of being secure, free from danger, fear and anxiety and being in a condition of being safe from undergoing injury or loss.

We have been inundated lately with news/stories of violence against the girl child, both in private and public. Hence, it is high time, we brace up to our responsibility by ensuring we put a total stop to this menace.

The most common form of violence against the girl child that have been on the increase in recent times are gang rape and human trafficking for sex. The time has come for parents, teachers, guardians, community leaders, religious leaders, Government and other stakeholders to speak with one voice to end the scourge.

**Here are some useful tips that can be shared with the Girl Child to ensure she remains safe;**

i) Never leave your children to strangers.

ii) Never allow your children (girl child) out alone,

iii) Never leave your children (girl child) in unsupervised play areas or parks.

iv) Children (girl child) should walk in well-lit areas and avoid dark areas.

v) They should vary their routes when going out and coming back home.

vi) They should know the names of any trusted adults and how to contact them if the need arises.

vii) Do not allow your child to be hugged or kissed by an adult.

viii) Ensure your children have your phone number and help line number memorised.

ix) Ensure your children don't accept things from strangers.

x) Teach your children how to defend or protect themselves in very dangerous situations. They can train on Taekwondo or Judo.

xi) Teach your children to be mentally alert.

xii) Teach your children to resist any uncomfortable situation.

xiii) Encourage an open conversation between you and your children.

xiv) Make your girl child your friend rather than having a mere Father and Daughter relationship with her.

xv) Supervise your children's use of social media and the internet.

xvi) Take time to explain all forms of child abuse and other forms of violence, so that she can be able to identify any in times of danger.

## What to look out for when a child is abused.

1. Lack of concentration in doing things.

2. Withdrawing to one's self.

3. Avoiding a particular person or place.

4. Aggressive to ordinary situation.

5. A spontaneous fear of dark areas.

6. Attempting to abandon home and seek refuge elsewhere.

7. Signs of depression setting in.

8. Poor performance in Child's school activities.

## How to handle such situation.

1. Hold yourself together and be extremely calm

2. Don't compound the situation in any way.

3. Put the child in the right mood.

4. Reassure the child, that it is not her fault.

5. Do not put her under pressure.

6. Seek professional help.

7. Seek redress against the perpetration by reporting to the proper security agencies.

You hear people saying "we are in the jet age". Yes we are. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the in-thing in the world over. Everyone, including children are exposed to the internet, making the world a global village.

However, there are inherent disadvantages/dangers associated with this modern age technology. Parents/Guardians should educate their children about the dangers that lurk online.

**Some measures to Protect children include:**

1. Installing the computer where every member of the family can see and access.

2. Having a password to restrict accessibility.

3. Blocking certain websites that are considered harmful.

4. Lastly, installing monitoring apps.

Lastly, I must implore parents to be prepared for the graduation of their Girl Child to puberty. Signs of puberty comes at different ages; some reach the age of puberty as early as 8-9 years. Parents are not supposed to be caught off guard during this period.

**SIGNS OF PUBERTY**

1) Enlarged Breast.

2) Noticeable pubic hair.

3) Body sweat.

4) Increase in body growth.

5) First menstrual period.

6) Genital development.

7) Skin and hair changes.

Thank you for listening.



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