

# Tribute to Hazel Brown

by

**Coalition against Domestic Violence**

The Coalition against Domestic Violence joins in appreciating the life and contributions of our sister, Hazel Brown. Hazel Brown was a committed activist, one who worked unceasingly for social justice and gender equality in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean.

As the founder of the NGO Network for the Advancement of Women, Hazel had a vision of a united women's movement working for social and economic justice and equality. She insisted that women belonged in Parliament in equal numbers to men and that this would be better for democratic representation and increased effectiveness of government.

She worked across party divides with women politicians, sharing her view that what should unite women in the political arena were the goals of equitable development and non-discrimination, goals that were greater and more worthy than partisan affiliations and loyalties.

Because of her efforts and especially at local government levels, more women had the confidence to step forward into arenas that can be hostile and offensive to women.

Hazel always looked to collaborate and partner. But she was unafraid of fighting for what she believed in, even if she were a lone voice. And she was so often a pioneer. She was a founding member of the National Alliance for Reconstruction; she worked on consumer rights; and she advocated for the use of solar cookers as more environmentally sound. For several years, Hazel supported cancer survivors in accessing treatment, including from Guyana.

Hazel considered it her civic duty to be involved in public life and to hold the government to account for transparent and effective governance. She was often to be found in Parliament observing the debates, whether on budget, the abolition of child marriage or amendments to the Domestic Violence Act. Her presence was a reminder that political decisions had to be transparent and serve the interests of the majority of people of the country and that they should be consistent with fundamental rights and freedoms.

She had a fearless quality and she was a genuine patriot, someone who never gave up on her vision of peace, security and equality for all.

CADV

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