

## GWI Celebrates Youth Building Peace

**Geneva, Switzerland, 12 August 2017** – This year, the 18<sup>th</sup> annual [International Youth Day](#), Graduate Women International (GWI) joins the global celebration of young people’s contributions to conflict prevention and transformation, inclusion, social justice and sustainable peace. GWI encourages all global citizens to acknowledge young women’s influence on the successful implementation of the 16<sup>th</sup> Sustainable Development Goal aims for Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

[The United Nations World Population Prospects](#) estimates that there are 1.3 billion 15 to 24-year-olds in the world and nearly one billion live in developing countries where conflict is more likely to have taken place. Because of conflict, the young women and girls are hindered from continuing their education, gaining career experience, and advancing in a safe atmosphere. For many, their dreams and aspirations are placed on hold while they contribute to the chaos in one way or another.

After the perils of conflict, true peace is hard to achieve, yet young people can be [major contributors](#) to peace talks and unrestricted peace processes. GWI recognizes that the world’s youth must act as mediators, community mobilizers and peace brokers and, at the same time underscores the absence of the inclusion of young women from peacebuilding efforts. To overcome the conflict aftermath left by their ancestors, these future women leaders must be properly educated and trained to develop relevant and culturally determined methods of peacebuilding for their respective countries. In order to promote the involvement of youth in maintaining peace and security, the [World Programme of Action for Youth](#) provides a policy framework and practical guidelines to improve the situation for young people.

Considering the theme, “Youth Building Peace,” and United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres’ calling 2017 the [year for peace](#) , GWI confirms the vital role that young women play in peacebuilding and urges government and world leaders to include young women in the writing and implementation of policy and legislation. They have more knowledge than given credit for after witnessing conflict directly and their contributions are substantial.

Graduate Women International (GWI) is a membership-based international NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland, with presence in over 60 countries. Founded in 1919, GWI is the leading girls’ and women’s global organisation advocating for women’s rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels. GWI is in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

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