



Graduate Women
International (GWI)

Press Release

Graduate Women International calls for governments, legislators, civil society, and individual citizens to mobilise, unite and end all forms of violence against women

Geneva, November 25, 2015 – On this International Day to Eliminate Violence Against Women (VAW), Graduate Women International (GWI) calls for all legislation to be fully implemented to this effect. Gender-based violence exists globally in all strata of society and disproportionately affects women and girls of all ages in many forms - physical, sexual, psychological, and economic. From domestic violence, non-state torture by individuals such as trafficking and rape, to female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, perpetrators of this abuse can exist at home, at school and in public life. As reports of gender-based violence in conflict and during displacement rise shockingly, it is the duty of those in a position of influence to bring justice to the perpetrators, and for society to make all forms of gender-based violence unacceptable. An environment must exist where reporting of violence attaches no stigma to the victims in order to end impunity and bring criminal justice to those who are guilty of such violations.

All states should ratify regional and international instruments that address the issue, including the Council of Europe [Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence](#), the [International Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women](#) and the United Nations [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). Governments and education providers must prioritise the security of girls by ensuring safe access and secure school campuses, including gender-segregated toilets.

GWI President Catherine Bell states: “Preventive interventions must be put in place – including legislation, community education and mobilisation to change social norms. School interventions must target staff and pupils with gender equality training. Men and boys need to be actively engaged in recognising that their role in bringing about an end to all forms of violence against women begins at home.”

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 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

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