



Graduate Women
International (GWI)

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On the 70th Annual Human Rights Day and on the brink of its centenary, Graduate Women International (GWI) celebrates the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as a Magna Carta for universal peace, development and human rights

Geneva, Switzerland, 10 December 2018 - Human Rights Day celebrates the adoption in 1948 of the UDHR as a standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations. As GWI prepares to celebrate another important milestone with its centenary in 2019, we uphold the UDHR as an unfailing source of inspiration in our mission to empower all women and girls to demand what should be guaranteed: their human rights. On this significant day, GWI reaffirms its commitment to protecting and fostering the human rights principles the UDHR established. Representing our National Federations and Associations, GWI will participate in a Celebration of Human Rights on 11 December in Geneva alongside the United Nations Human Rights Committee. During this event, sponsored by the United Nations of Geneva, gathering professionals and representatives from local NGOs and international organisations, GWI will raise awareness about the importance of education as a human right and the empowerment of all women and girls through safe and quality education at the highest level.

The UDHR is the most translated document in the world, available in more than 500 languages and, at 70 years, is as relevant today as it was on the day it was proclaimed. This unique Declaration empowers us all by establishing the equal dignity and worth of every person. While we are yet to fulfill the promises laid out by this Declaration its universality and perennial values of equality, justice, respect and human dignity remain evident.

“As contributors to universal peace and as we prepare to celebrate our organisation’s centenary, GWI remains committed to fostering the values of the UDHR by championing the right of women and girls to quality education, to live in peaceful societies and to take their places in leadership roles during our next century of existence and activism”, says Geeta Desai, GWI President. “Our theme in July 2019 “Peace through Education” reflects our deep-seated recognition of education, particularly education for women and girls as the cornerstone of peaceful, just and sustainable societies”, she adds.

GWI particularly recognizes that women and girls’ rights are fundamental human rights and promotes the right to quality and safe education for all women and girls worldwide as a means of fostering peace and security and the path forward towards the realization of the principles of the UDHR and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With a focus on SDG 16 “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”, GWI calls for the recognition of peace as a basic human right, urging all to foster a culture of peace through the promotion of human rights including the right to quality education.

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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