



Graduate Women
International (GWI)

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On Human Rights Day, Graduate Women International and its affiliates unite to eliminate Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and emphasise the right to education as a means to end GBV

Geneva, Switzerland, 10 December 2019—Graduate Women International (GWI) marks Human Rights Day, the final day of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) campaign, with a commemoration of the adoption of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(UDHR\)](#) in 1948. To mobilise members for the 16 Days of Activism, GWI recently released a comprehensive Advocacy Toolkit to increase awareness about and advocate for the eradication of GBV that can be found [HERE](#), and GWI's long time affiliate the Canadian Federation of University Women interactive toolkit from 2018, can be found [HERE](#). With a united voice, GWI and its affiliates urge members and friends to visit the toolkits to participate in this international movement for the elimination of GBV. As a fitting conclusion to the 16 Days Campaign, GWI reinforces its commitments towards human rights and engagement towards fighting GBV by ensuring lifelong education for women and girls.

“Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is one of the most widespread, cross-cultural human rights violations in our world today, yet one of the most underreported issues due to impunity, shame and low economic resources for women”, says Terry Oudraad, President, GWI. “Targeted violence like GBV manifests itself in physical, sexual and psychological forms that detrimentally impact women’s empowerment. Education combats GBV by reducing vulnerabilities of women to experience violence, but also preventing GBV by raising awareness”, she adds.

Today, on the 30th remembrance of the brutal act of GBV in Montréal, Canada on 6 December 1989, that tragically left 14 women murdered due to their gender, GWI reaffirms its unwavering commitment to end GBV. This senseless act of GBV directly affected GWI’s CFUW affiliate. The shocking incident contributed to the creation of the 16 Days of Activism and revealed the imperative need to tackle the issue of VAWG. As contributors to illuminating the harmful effects of GBV, GWI calls for education of all levels for women and girls, as their fundamental human right stated in the UDHR, to eliminate GBV.

GWI is a membership-based international non-governmental organisation 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 the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 1947 and maintains official relations with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as well as the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

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Contributing to this press release is GWI intern, Kate Choi.

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