

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**On International Day of Peace 2020, Graduate Women International reminds Member States of their commitment to women as means to building sustainable peace**

**Geneva, Switzerland, 21 September 2020** — The COVID-19 crisis has ravaged the entire world. Peace processes are upended in every geographical region. On International Day of Peace, established in 1981 by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly as a global day of non-violence and ceasefire, **GWI seizes the opportunity to remind Member States of their commitment to the 2000 landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 that specifies the vital role of women in peacebuilding and stresses the importance of their equal participation in all peacebuilding efforts.** Aligning with this year's UN theme "Shaping peace together", GWI underscores that peace cannot be achieved without women's participation. GWI also urges institutions and peacebuilding organisations to include women as actors of peace on local, national, and international levels.

Women represent a minimal share of the people involved in peace processes: they made up only 3% of mediators, 4% of signatories, and 13% of negotiators of peace processes between 1992 and 2018 ([UN Women](#)). Nevertheless, they are also subjected to specific issues and deliberate violations of their human rights in conflict areas and in non-conflict areas. The gendered dimensions of conflicts are unquestionable, which is why women's participation in decision-making is a necessity. A 2015 study by UN Women shows that gender equality is the number one predictor of peace. Studies also reveal that when women participate in peace negotiations, the quality and durability of peace agreements increases, and when women are signatories of peace agreements, they are more likely to be implemented ([UN Women](#)).

"Commendable examples of the capacity of women leaders to resolve crises have been shown this year, and in the past across the globe", says GWI President, Terry Oudraad. "No more proof of the positive impacts of women's participation in peacebuilding should be necessary, yet inclusiveness for women remains undervalued. Therefore, the work of GWI forges forward", she continues.

In this sense, GWI reminds the necessity of the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Agenda, and especially Sustainable Development Goal 16 to "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels". The year 2020 and its challenges are the occasion for states to honour their commitments. Shaping peace together and building back better must fully include the unheard voices of half this planet's population.

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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*Contributing to this press release is GWI summer intern, Sophie Husser.*