



Press Release

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On Human Rights Day, Graduate Women International and its human rights advocates worldwide unite to eliminate gender-based violence

Geneva, Switzerland, 10 December 2023 - On Human Rights Day, Graduate Women International (GWI) stands at the forefront, commemorating the landmark 75th anniversary of the 1948 adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that set out fundamental principles of human rights to be universally protected. This year's Human Rights Day theme, "Freedom, Equality and Justice for All", serves as a reminder of the importance of upholding the UDHR values as a common standard of achievement for all nations and their people. Notably, this day marks the conclusion of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), an annual campaign championed by GWI to raise awareness and advocate for the eradication of all forms of violence against women and girls and their right to education.

GWI marked Human Rights Day with the conclusion of its 16 Days social media poster campaign. The campaign, a collective effort of GWI members worldwide, shared inspiration and reflections on the topics related to GBV and raised awareness about the importance of GBV eradication, gender equality, and education. To conclude the 16 Days campaign, GWI emphasises its commitment to dismantling the barriers GBV imposes on education for women and girls as an indisputable human right. The comprehensive campaign can be found [here](#).

On behalf of GWI members worldwide who are human rights advocates, GWI President, Patrice Wellesley-Cole says, "It is our belief at GWI that, against the prevalence of GBV in the world, we must provide continued effort beyond the 16 days". She adds, "We are an inclusive and diverse organisation and as we are working toward the 2030 Agenda, it is important to reaffirm the UDHR as an anchor in our mission to lifelong education for women and girls. Embracing our common humanity, GWI's vision is for the empowerment of women and girls through human rights. This underscores the right to education on the basis of non- discrimination and equality".

The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 4 has set a clear target of ensuring all girls have equal and free access to primary and secondary education. Despite this goal, the UN estimates a staggering 83 million children and young people will be left without access to education by 2030 without additional measures. To achieve this goal, the global community must continue raising awareness and advocating for women's and girls' rights to education, government, and leadership roles in the private and public sectors. GWI emphasizes that there is no time to spare in addressing education as an unequivocal human right.

About GWI: 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.

Contributing to this press release is Fall 2023 Intern, Marie Mihalcea.
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