

Statement to mark International Women's Day 2016

The International Council of Women, since its founding in 1888, has worked to advance the equal rights of women and end all forms of discrimination, including violence, they endure. In working to achieve this, the Council fully supports the United Nations instruments and resolutions to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women, including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action, Security Council Resolution 1325, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

It is the Human Right of all Women:

- to be educated,
- to realize their aspirations,
- to have control over their livelihood,
- to contribute their abilities to society,
- to receive equal pay for equal work,
- to live healthily,
- to live free from violence and fear,
- to live with dignity, and
- to live in peace.

Yet, in many parts of the world, women are discriminated against in education, job and promotion opportunities, wage parity and political participation, among others. In some societies women suffer from early marriage, trafficking for the sex industry, also domestic and sexual violence. We further note with deep concern the serious violation of human rights of women refugees.

The International Council of Women stresses the urgency for all nations to take steps to hasten the achievement of gender equality, a crucial factor toward sustainable and future development of the world. The equal and full participation of women in all spheres of life helps the world to overcome impending challenges such as climate change, water security, regional wars and humanitarian crises; achieve sustainable development for future generations; and create a more just society and inclusive economy.

The International Council of Women will continue its efforts to realize the vision of a society with gender equality where all women and men share the same opportunities to maximize their potentials. Let us accelerate to network and unite our hearts to make this world far better for women to live in.