



Socialist International Women

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

International Women's Day 2019

DECLARATION

International Women's Day (IWD) is an opportunity to honour and celebrate all women and girls around the world for their invaluable contribution to their families and communities. The Socialist International Women (SIW) warmly supports this year's IWD theme "Think equal, build smart, innovate for change" in recognition that fresh perspectives and inventive approaches are needed in our continuing struggle for gender equality. We do not yet know how enriched all of our lives could be with the full participation of women and girls or how much we have already lost through their absence. History has shown that it is often not enough to improve existing social, legal and cultural traditions which have been dominated by the interests and viewpoints of men. A radical shift is urgently needed towards the normalisation of consideration of the specific needs of women and girls and their human rights as equals with men. With this approach - think equal, build smart, innovate for change - our vision of a planet 50-50 by 2030 can be sustainably achieved and transform the daily reality of women and girls in all aspects of their educational, working, community and private lives.

The SIW welcomes the CSW63 priority theme of "Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls" as an opportunity to share ideas and help shape and influence the political will required to accelerate urgently needed changes. A vital foundation for the creation of meaningful gender equality is the provision of appropriate social protection systems, which address the particular needs of women and girls. This is essential to enable women to realise their full personal potential as equals with men and fully participate in the governance and economies of their communities and regions. It is critical that we create communities where women's time is freed up from excessive un-paid household and carer duties with social provision of services such as maternity care, childcare and elderly care. Access to services must consider the realities of women's lives and be available where and when women can realistically participate and also be affordable for all. Communities and businesses have their part to play too, in providing flexible arrangements which allow women to learn, develop and bring up families while still being able to progress and have a voice.

The changes possible once women are free to flourish are profoundly supportive of sustainable, peaceful and prosperous communities and beneficial to us all. The starting point for the grassroots shifts in thinking and action required is embodied in International Women's Day, in highlighting the enormous contribution of women and girls, their ingenuity, tenacity, intelligence and the immense value of their roles within their families and communities.

Socialist International Women invites all of its members and affiliated bodies to pause and reflect on the courageous women who have gone before us in our fight for gender equality and recommit support for all who are continuing this powerful movement for women's rights and equality today.