



Socialist International Women

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

International Women's Day 2016

DECLARATION

The Socialist International Women (SIW) reaffirms its support of International Women's Day (IWD) and its primary objectives of honouring women and girls worldwide and celebrating the collective achievements of the international women's movement towards the empowerment of women and the realisation of global gender equality. Reflecting on the many successes in gender related issues over the last century is a vital reminder that tangible change is achievable. It is also a powerful call to all to recommit to taking action to achieve gender parity in all aspects of the lives of women and girls, including access to quality healthcare, education and employment; the right to ownership of assets; the expectation and protection of personal safety and the assertion of core human rights and freedoms.

During 2015 a detailed review of the achievements made since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) highlighted a number of critical gender related issues and specific geographical regions where progress was either absent altogether or unacceptably slow. On a global scale, one of the biggest issues of acute concern is the continuing pandemic of violence against women, which permeates all aspects of the public and private lives of millions of women and girls. In 2015 the United Nations introduced 17 multi-platform Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG5 - *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*, as a call to member State and non-State actors to commit to taking urgent action to accelerate the speed of change, and urgently address all outstanding issues.

The sustainability of the planet as a whole is also of acute concern. SIW is firmly supportive of all SDGs and global initiatives which promote the alleviation of the degradation of our planet and the effects of severe climate change. All global communities are potentially at risk of suffering the detrimental consequences of climate change, including impacts on the ability to grow crops and support livestock, the availability of drinking water and the deterioration of the habitability of regions and nations. SIW declares its commitment to the agreements adopted at the COP21 in Paris and affirms its support of the implementation of these proposals worldwide.

SIW is firmly committed to achievement of the SDGs, particularly SDG5 - *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*, and strongly asserts that a critical aspect in the successful realisation of gender-equal participation in sustainable development worldwide is the mobilisation of political will. This factor is essential to securing state maintenance funding and promoting the embedding of gender inclusive initiatives and institutions within local and national socioeconomic frameworks. In many regions political will has proven to be the driving force for speeding up societal normalisation of women's participation in high-level and localised discussions and decision-making, which is the foundation of creating lasting gender equality change.

The SIW affirms its support for the UN theme for IWD 2016 of *'Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality'*. This key theme concurs with SIW's firm belief that acceleration of the speed of change is essential to achieve the SDGs in the coming 14 years. Recent history has proven that there remains much urgent and essential work to be done. This work can only be completed with international and intercultural collaboration, increased levels of member state commitment, higher prioritisation of gender related issues and sustained, pertinent action.

The SIW recommits to strongly promoting and supporting the achievement of gender equality and increasing the participation of women in sustainable development initiatives. SIW maintains that the contribution of the often unique knowledge, skills, perspectives and approaches of women are both invaluable and essential to creating and maintaining equitable, democratic, peaceful and sustainable communities and regions. SIW reiterates its core conviction that gender equality within sustainable development benefits not just women and girls, but the entire global community.
