



Graduate Women  
International (GWI)

# Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **On International Students' Day, GWI celebrates students steering a more sustainable future for all**

Geneva, Switzerland, 17 November 2018— Since 1941, International Students' Day is marked annually on 17 November. Although the day originally served to commemorate the atrocities inflicted on the students during the Nazi Occupation in Prague in 1939, it now is observed as a non-political celebration of students, highlighting students' rights and the importance of higher education. On International Students' Day 2018, Graduate Women International (GWI) emphasises the essential role students play in building a more equal and sustainable future for all.

“When all efforts are needed to build a better future for all, women’s and girls’ potential remains largely and unjustly untapped”, says Geeta Desai, GWI President. “Yet, the students of today are the leaders and builders of tomorrow: now is the time for the global community to invest in the education of all women and girls at the highest level to, in turn, benefit from their vitality and creativity”, she adds.

The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are a blue print to attain a better and more sustainable future. From the elimination of poverty (SDG1) and hunger (SDG2), through the development of sustainable cities (SDG11), and on to prevailing peace and justice (SDG16), all 17 SDGs require educated and thoughtful public citizens. With access to higher education, students will acquire the skills and knowledge to improve their own lives and the future of the global community. Yet, millions of women and girls around the world continue to be unjustly denied the opportunity to pursue their education up to the highest level and become the change-makers that the world needs today.

As an organisation committed to improving the education space for women and girls, GWI joins global efforts to ensure that all women and girls can fulfil their right to quality education and express their full potential. Through the [Teachers for Rural Futures Programme](#), GWI sponsors rural female students from Uganda to become qualified secondary teachers. Increasing the number of qualified and trained women teachers in rural Uganda represents a important opportunity to increase the quality of secondary education for all, increase girls' access to and completion of secondary education, and provide important role models for girls and their communities. Women teachers will be influential ambassadors for girls' education and build support in communities for girls to attend school.

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 Liza Cahiz from Boston University