

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

25th NOVEMBER, 2023



INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

We call on state authorities including security agencies, the legislature, judiciary and executive to deploy human and material resources towards preventing all forms and manifestations of violence against women and girls. We also implore relevant authorities to ensure that perpetrators of violence against women and girls are adequately punished.

November 25th, 2023 has been globally reserved as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The day also marks the onset of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (November 25th to December 10th) for the year 2023. In commemoration of this significant dates, the Initiative for Research, Innovation and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD) and its electoral arm, The Electoral Hub, join the global community in recognizing the critical significance of these dates.

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women dovetails with the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence to serve as a reminder that violence against women is a pervasive challenge globally, requiring concerted action from all stakeholders. The theme for 2023, "UNiTE! Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women & Girls," underscores the need for resources to be deployed toward the prevention of violence against women and girls. This need is further heightened by the disturbing statistics of cases of violence against women and girls globally and in Nigeria. On the global scene, an estimated 736 million women have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence. In Nigeria, the Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey has shown that 31% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 have experienced violence. This poses a major cause for concern in a world marked by growing awareness of the role of women in development.

Violence against women and girls manifests in several ways, including intimate partner violence, sexual violence and harassment, human trafficking, female genital mutilation and child marriage. In addition to this, our targeted project at The Electoral Hub, Monitoring Violence Against Women and PWDs in Elections in Nigeria, revealed that women face both physical and structural violence in Nigerian political and electoral contexts. This further justifies the need for action and advocacy toward addressing violence against women in Nigeria. Given observed issues, the need for action, and this year's theme, we call on all domestic and international stakeholders to act concertedly towards investing in preventing violence against women.

We, therefore, call on state authorities including security agencies, the legislature, judiciary and executive to deploy human and material resources towards preventing all forms and manifestations of violence against women. We also implore relevant authorities to ensure that perpetrators of violence against women are adequately punished.

Similarly, we urge the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Women Affairs and other relevant ministries, departments and agencies in Nigeria to engage the public through rigorous sensitization and awareness campaigns against all forms of violence against women. Civil society actors, the media and citizen groups are also urged to act towards the goal of eliminating all forms of violence against women in Nigeria.

As we commemorate this momentous date, we must collectively acknowledge that challenges of gender-based violence, especially in the electoral context, have severe implications not only for women and girls but for society as a whole.

Let us all speak up towards creating a safe world for women. Silence is tantamount to complicity!

*#IRIAD4Women&Girls #BreakTheChainsTogether #UnitedAgainstGBV
#BreaktheSilienceAndBuildCommunities #16DaysOfActivism2023
#NoExcuse #IRIAD4Women&Girls*

Signed

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