

MEDIA ADVISORY

Tribute Today To Honor Women's Human Rights Defenders (#WHRDsResist) at #HLPF2017

Tuesday, July 11

The Women's Major Group, alongside core partners, is pleased to launch its exhibit highlighting the crucial role of Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRD's) in the sustainable development agenda. For the SDG's to be implemented, every actor's voice will help achieve the ambitious and transformative agenda. There is recent progress on commitment to WHRDs at a global level, including the first UN General Assembly resolution on WHRDs in 2013, and subsequent resolutions passed by the UN Human Rights Council and the GA in 2014 and 2015, that specifically reference the important work of WHRDs, and the need for states to take appropriate steps to protect them. This exhibit seeks to bring into light the interlinkage between existing WHRDs instruments and the 2030 Agenda, but also to point out the need of making explicit that they are central to the agenda. Despite calls from civil society, the 2030 agenda fails to mention the important and legitimate role of WHRDs working on sustainable development-related issues. Even more so, we can't achieve sustainable development if one single person risks its life or dignity in pursue of the highest standards of human right and the health of our planet.

WHEN

Today, Tuesday July 11, 6 pm

WHERE

Outside Conference Room E, United Nations Headquarters, New York

WHAT

Launch of our exhibition and peaceful tribute to honoring women human rights defenders who were killed and those at risk.

WHY

Since the start of the 2030 Agenda, hundreds of women human rights defenders (WHRDs), have faced repression, persecution, threats, intimidation, violence, and even murder and assassination. Just last week, the daughter of Berta Cáceres' (a Honduran feminist activist, environmental human rights defender and leader of the indigenous Lenca community who was murdered by the militia in her country last year) [survived an assassination attempt](#). To honor the women human rights defenders who continue to risk their lives as they work fearlessly to advance women's rights in their communities and countries, draw attention to their plight, the Women's Major Group (WMG) is hosting an exhibition and peaceful tribute during the High Level Political Forum on the Sustainable Development Goals held at the United Nations.

Here are some of the women who will be commemorated:

Tuğçe Albayrak, Germany,
Dorothy Stang, USA/Brazil
Helen Joanne Cox, UK
Loretta Saunders, Canada
Hande Kader, Turkey
Leila Alaoui, France/Morocco
Intisar Hasairi, Libya
Nilce de Souza Magalhães, Brazil
Brenda Marleni Estrada Tambito, Guatemala
Anabel Flores Salazar, Mexico
Angélica Miriam Quintanilla Hernández, El Salvador
Berta Cáceres, Honduras
Sagal Salad Osman, Somalia
Fezekile Ntsukela "Khwezi" Kuzwayo, South Africa
Joan Kagezi, Uganda
Teresita Navacilla, Philippines
Safia Ahmed-Jan, Afghanistan
Sabeen Mahmud, Pakistan
Samira Saleh Al-Naimi, Iraq
Helen Rumbali, Papua New Guinea
Sunila Abeysekera, Sri Lanka

Despite growing attention to the violence and violations of rights that WHRDs face globally and increased awareness of the need to protect them--reports show violence against WHRDs has continued to increase in all parts of the world. Militarization, conflicts over resources, and all forms of religious fundamentalisms and cultural extremisms are all factors in the growing repression of women who stand up for their rights and for the rights of their communities.

WHRDs continue to take a stand for freedom of expression, land rights and rights of indigenous and rural communities, rights of political participation, reproductive rights (including the right to abortion), sexual health and reproductive health rights, and rights of communities facing discrimination because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. All which are key issues that must be addressed in the aim to eradicate poverty (the theme of this year's HLPF), and absolutely vital in the cause to defeminize poverty.

Their work in these areas has meant they face repression, arrest and detention, and physical violence, including assassination. Despite recent progress on commitment to WHRDs at a global level, including the UN General Assembly passing its [first resolution on WHRDs](#) in December 2013, and subsequent resolutions passed by the UN Human Rights Council and the GA in [2014](#) and [2015](#), in **2016 and 2017 alone, hundreds of WHRDs (see WHRDIC's Statement below) globally have faced increased crackdowns by state and non-state**

actors in their work; proliferation of laws that limit freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly; restrictions and attacks on organizations and civil society groups, and shrinking of feminist spaces; violence, threats, intimidation and murder.

Interviews, Quotes & Photos:

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Visual Resources:

[Watch a powerful tribute video by AWID honoring #WHRDs](#)

[Online campaign: #WHRDsResist](#)

Other Resources:

[Women's Major Group's HLPF 2017 position paper](#)

[Statement on International Women Human Rights Defenders day 2016 WHRDIC](#)