

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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## **14 November, 2017: ACTION**

### **Women Human Rights and Environmental Defenders (WHRDs) Resist**

#### **WHAT**

Since the start of the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement, hundreds of women human rights and environmental defenders (WHREDs), have faced repression, persecution, threats, intimidation, violence, and even murder and assassination. Just this year, 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 and environmental defenders who continue to risk their lives as they work fearlessly to advance women's rights and defend the climate in their communities and countries and to draw attention to their plight, the Women's Gender Constituency (WGC) is making a tribute during the COP23.

#### **WHO**

Open for any peace loving people.

#### **WHEN**

Tuesday, November 14, 2017

1:30-2:00 PM

#### **WHERE**

Bula Zone, near the stairs in front of the New York Meeting Room entrance

#### **WHY**

To commemorate and pay tribute to the work of WHRDs, and increase awareness of women human right defenders globally. To call for the international community to commit to the recognition and protection of WHRDs and their human rights, as legitimate and critical actors, and key implementers of the Paris Agreement. For states to recognize the critical role of Women Human Rights Defenders in advancing not only SDG Goal 5, but also across all aspects of climate change solutions, and all areas of the framework of the Climate Conference

Here are some of the women who will be commemorated:

1. Jessybel Sanchez, The Philippines
2. Maria Myrna Cayag, The Philippines
3. Nelly Amaya Perez, Columbia
4. Gloria Capitan, The Philippines
5. Teresita Navacilla, The Philippines
6. Ana-Marie Didgaynon Aumada, The Philippines
7. Diane Asero, The Philippines
8. Berta Caceres, Honduras
9. Lesbia Yaneth Urquía, Honduras
10. Nilce de Souza Magalhães, Brazil
11. Maricela Tombé, Columbia
12. Anibal Coronado, Columbia
13. Yoryanis Isabel Bernal Varela, Columbia
14. Ruth Alicia Lopez Guisao, Columbia
15. Meztli Omixochitl Sarabia, Mexico
16. Manuelita Cumba Mascariñas-Green, The Philippines
17. Salwa Bughaighis, Libya
18. Sabeen Mahmud, Pakistan

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), sexuality-related rights, and rights of communities facing discrimination because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. All 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 of climate justice.

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.**

## **ABOUT**

The Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) is one of the nine stakeholder groups of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Established in 2009, the WGC now consists of 27 women's and environmental civil society organizations, who are working to ensure that women's voices and their rights are embedded in all processes and results of the UNFCCC framework, for a sustainable and just future, so that gender equality and women's human rights are central to the ongoing discussions. As the WGC represents the voices of hundreds and thousands of people across the globe, members of the Constituency are present at each UNFCCC meeting and intercessional alongside the UNFCCC Secretariat, governments, civil society observers and other stakeholders to ensure that women's rights and gender justice are core elements of the UNFCCC. In this action the constituency is joined by other stakeholders committed to advancing women's human rights, peace and climate justice.

<http://womengenderclimate.org>

## **MORE RESOURCES**

*Women and Gender Constituency Key Demands:*

<http://womengenderclimate.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/WGCKeyDemands-1.pdf>  
[Statement on International Women Human Rights Defenders day 2016 WHRDIC](#)

### **Visual Resources:**

[Watch a powerful tribute video by AWID honoring #WHRDs](#)  
[Online campaign: #WHRDsResist](#)