



## Statement by Graduate Women International (GWI) on Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention

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*GWI and all her members urge the Government of the Republic of Turkey to reconsider its withdrawal.*

Date: 22 March 2021

Graduate Women International (GWI) is a 100-year-old international NGO, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, whose focus is on education and protection of women's and children's human rights, including all forms of violence against them. GWI, maintains special consultative status with United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and the International Labour Organization.

With regret and intolerance GWI notes Turkey's withdrawal from the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention and Combatting Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (the "Istanbul Convention"). GWI reiterates the concerns expressed by the [United Nations in Turkey](#), [UN Women](#) and numerous civil society organisations.

GWI's international network of graduate women, jointly express concern for all Turkish women, and stand in special solidarity with our Turkish sisters of Türk Universiteli Kadınlar Dernegi, (Turkish Association of University Women).

This action comes at a time when concerted international action and commitment to end violence against women and girls is critical as violence against women and girls, especially in the home, has increased considerably due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the Commission on the Status of Women 65, currently meeting virtually, many (women) organisations are reporting on the increased violence against women and girls and are urging states and institutions to take bolder and game-changing actions that continue to move civil society forward, to ensure that women and girls live free from violence, in line with the principle of gender equality and the commitment to "leave no one behind" of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

GWI and all her members urge the Government of the Republic of Turkey to reconsider its withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, which builds on the standards enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as well as its general recommendations. We urge the continued protection of human right of all women and girls to live free from violence.

With urgency,  
GWI Board of Officers and Executive Director