

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **International Women's Day – 8 March 2017: Minister Announces Working Group To Look At Gender Pay Gap In Gibraltar**

Today is International Women's Day. "Be Bold for Change" is the year's campaign theme. Over 100 years since it was first established in 1911, why is there still a need for this? It is simply because it is important to continue to acknowledge and recognise women who have achieved equal participation in global development and to continue to strive to attain equality in areas where it has not yet been achieved.

It is my responsibility as the first Minister for Equality to consider issues that may lead to gender inequality, today how inequalities against women may arise.

In Gibraltar we are privileged in that women have equal access to education, healthcare and employment.

For many women, balancing a career and family life is not easy however well organised and well-intended. In general, women sometimes tend to fret on whether they have taken too much time off work after having children and whether this absence may have been for too long thereby affecting their employment and promotion prospects. This can in turn lead to the question as to whether women can earn the same and progress in the same way as their male counterparts.

As Minister for Equality I am aware of these concerns and my Ministry and I are working to identifying ways in which we may encourage progress towards true gender equality in this area. I am therefore happy to announce that I will be forming a working group to look at whether there is a gender pay gap issue.

I am a believer in that it is through educational programmes that younger members of our community can be encouraged to know that they too can make a positive difference in gender equality. Year 12 pupils at Westside School have once again this year as part of their Liberal Studies been working on a project on gender equality.

As Minister for Equality I fully support all educational programmes which act as a catalyst for personal and social development and so, this year I shall once again be presenting the awards to the video and poster project winners.



It goes without saying that, as Minister for Equality, together with my staff from the Ministry of Equality, we will lead on and encourage progress towards true gender equality in Gibraltar. We will continue to strive in working in partnerships with women and men in both the public and private sector to roll out policies and programmes to achieve this and; I want to conclude my International Women's Day wishes by re-affirming that we simply cannot afford to wait for things to happen. We need to make them happen and it needs to be a collective approach by both women, men, young and old. As women we must feel empowered and be bold to make that difference and effect change