



Indian Diaspora Council

## Indian Diaspora Council International

*Shared heritage, aspirations and interests*

[www.IndianDiasporaCouncil.org](http://www.IndianDiasporaCouncil.org)

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### Observance of International Women's Day 2019

The **Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC)**, in collaboration with its global membership and affiliates, is pleased to join with other organizations, associations, agencies, groups and individuals in observance of the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of United Nations declared International Women's Day.

The seeds were planted in 1908, when 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay and the right to vote. The idea to make the day international came from Clara Zetkin who suggested the idea of International Women's Day in 1910 at an International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen. There were 100 women there, from 17 countries, and they agreed unanimously. It was first celebrated in 1911, in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. The centenary was celebrated in 2011, so this year we're technically celebrating the 108<sup>th</sup> International Women's Day. It became official in 1975 when the United Nations (UN) started celebrating the day and setting an annual theme.

This year's theme is **#BalanceforBetter**. UN figures show that only half of working age women are represented in the labour force globally. International Women's Day has become a date to celebrate how far women have come in society, in politics and in economics, while the political roots of the day mean strikes and protests are organized to raise awareness of continued inequality.

"Today's woman need to be better educated, be assertive and to be able to provide the best that we can for ourselves and our families. Effectively, woman should be treated as equals at home, the work place and in society as a whole and all year round and not just one day of year on International Women's Day. We should be treated with respect and dignity without suffering abuse of any kind. Women are the backbone of our country and they are phenomenal human beings. The amazing woman is making our society a better place and making strides in our community despite their difficulties" - *Rita Abraham, Chair of IDC's Women's Forum.*

"As we celebrate International Women's Day, may we all be reminded that our collective movement toward gender parity should be stronger than ever. We cannot afford to be complacent with the progress we already have. We are still far from total gender equality particularly in less developed countries. Our voices should never wane nor soften until we are heard loud and clear. Gender parity isn't only for those of us struggling to find our place today but for also the young women who are looking to us for direction and hope. We need to be united on all fronts so that we may hand over a future that is grounded on fairness and equality—a future that not only sees beyond gender limitations but also eliminates them. Together we Press For Progress!" - *Shadel Nyack Compton, IDC Coordinator (Grenada); Managing Dir., Belmont Estate Group of Companies St. Patrick, Grenada, West Indies.*

"We pay homage to all women who struggled for their rights and equitable treatment, and persevered under very harsh conditions and obstacles to achieve respect and dignity. Women have made significant advances in almost all segments of society yet there remain many hurdles to overcome and many obstacles to be removed for women to advance and achieve full potential and bring about equity at all levels. Women account for more than 50% of the population of the world while their untapped resources of talent, skills, aspirations and skills can help society as a whole. IDC's Women's Forum has taken many initiatives on women's issues and women of the Indian Diaspora must be encouraged to advance this agenda forward and be examples to women of the developed and developing world" - *Ashook Ramsaran, President, IDC*

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*Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage, and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations, and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.*