



**Joint Statement by UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria, Adam Abdelmoula, and Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis, Muhannad Hadi, on the 16 Days of Activism Campaign**

Damascus and Amman, 25 November 2023

Today is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Every year, this day also kicks off the global 16 Days of Activism campaign against gender-based violence (GBV). This 32-year-old initiative shines a light on the violence that disproportionately affects women and girls everywhere, including in Syria. Over seven million people, the overwhelming majority of whom are women and girls, are currently in need of GBV services in the country. Worldwide, violence against women and girls is one of the most prevalent and pervasive human rights violations.

This year's theme is "UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls." The [campaign](#) calls on citizens to share the actions they are taking to create a world free from violence towards women. This year's campaign also calls on governments worldwide to share how they are investing in GBV prevention. The 16 Days campaign culminates on Human Rights Day, on 10 December.

As in many countries, gender-based violence is a persistent and tragic reality in Syria, manifesting itself in the form of physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, exacerbated by the compounding impacts of the long-running crisis, displacement and economic deterioration. Women and girls in Syria also face movement restrictions and are often excluded from employment opportunities and access to critical assistance.

The UN has spearheaded the efforts to address GBV across Syria. These efforts need to continue and increase, towards providing life-saving services to GBV survivors; addressing root causes of GBV, meaningfully investing in eliminating harmful gender norms and ensuring that the rights and well-being of women and girls are protected.

Syria has been in a continuous downward socio-economic slide, driving more people deeper into poverty and exhausting people's coping mechanisms. The recent wave of hostilities and violence in parts of the country, the worst Syria has seen in years, has claimed multiple lives of women and children, displaced thousands of people and put an additional strain on the plight of vulnerable communities.

Addressing the GBV crisis is a shared responsibility – including by public institutions, civil society, communities and their leaders, humanitarian actors in Syria and the international community. The UN is committed to continue working with all stakeholders to eradicate GBV in Syria, address its root causes and protect its survivors. We count on our local partners, donors and the international community to support us in achieving these imperatives.