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Women's Resource Centre celebrates 100th anniversary of International Women's Day with call for UK government to protect women's rights

Despite challenging economic times the UK government must ensure the rights of women are protected both at home and abroad as we commemorate the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day across the country and the world, the Women's Resource Centre says.

While much has been gained in the past 100 years for women in the UK, from the vote, to the Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act, there remain widespread concerns that the current environment of cuts in government spending and loss of vital services to women could hamper efforts for women to attain full equality in the UK.

“As we celebrate this landmark anniversary of International Women's Day it is more essential than ever that the government ensure that women's rights are not forgotten and that the services across the country who assist women in need are not abandoned by local government,” said Vivienne Hayes, chief executive of Women's Resource Centre.

“The recent budget cuts and threats to services such as legal aid risk setting women in this country back by years both financially and legally. While there have been some successes – and we commend the government for its recent move to provide up to £10.5m for funding rape crisis centres – more must be done to ensure the rights of women in the UK, particularly those from the most vulnerable and marginalised communities, are at the heart of policy and decision making.”

In addition, this May the government will submit a report to the United Nations outlining how they are tackling discrimination against women in the UK and responding to recommendations for action from 2008.

Many of these recommendations remain unfulfilled, therefore it is crucial that the UN that the government fulfil their obligations under CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women).

“CEDAW remains one of the most powerful tools for benchmarking progression in women's rights across the world. The UK government must ensure that it commits to its obligations under CEDAW so the daily discrimination women face in the UK is tackled with concerted effort.”

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You can also find WRC on Twitter: @whywomen

Notes for editors/about WRC

About WRC - the Women's Resource Centre (WRC) is a charity which supports women's organisations to be more effective and sustainable. We provide training, information, resources and one-to-one support on a range of organisational development issues. We also lobby decision makers on behalf of the women's not-for-profit sector for improved representation and funding.

Our 350 member organisations work in a wide range of fields including violence against women, employment, education, rights and equality, the criminal justice system and the environment. They deliver services to and campaign on behalf of some of the most marginalised communities of women.