

Cabinet Secretary pledges to stand against inequality, violence and abuse on International Women's Day

Leading a debate in the Senedd, the Cabinet Secretary said:

“The first International Women’s Day took place over 100 years ago. Since then it has grown into a truly global event – a day when the achievements of girls and women are recognised irrespective of nationality, ethnicity, language, culture, wealth or politics. It is an excellent example of how people can come together, as one, for a common cause.

“Shining a spotlight on inequality and presenting the stark evidence that exists to show how women are still being treated unfairly can only facilitate meaningful change. Men have a duty to speak out on inequality, violence and abuse. We need an International Women’s Day because those battles are not yet won. Until that time comes, I’m proud to stand with those who call out the abusers, the sexists and the denigrators of women – whoever they may be and wherever they may peddle their poisonous misogyny.”

The theme for International Women’s Day in Wales this year is ‘Creating an Equal Future’ and the Cabinet Secretary highlighted action the Welsh Government is taking to enhance the lives and opportunities of girls and women across Wales.

He said:

“Creating an Equal Future” chimes well with the Welsh Government’s aims and commitments. From tackling poverty, delivering a more diverse pool of decision-makers in public life, lessening the pay gap, supporting women back to work after having children and tackling violence and abuse, our Equality Objectives ensure that action is focused on the areas which disproportionately affect women and the other protected groups.

“We must recognise the importance of men playing their part in working for gender equality. We all have a part to play. Without men as committed allies, and supportive partners in this quest led by women, genuine change will not happen. The positive impacts of gender equality are good for all of us, our families and society as a whole.

“We must also stand together against domestic abuse and other types of violence against women, which can have devastating and long-

lasting consequences. The key is to change attitudes and get the message across that violent behaviour is not acceptable in any circumstances, and will not be tolerated in our society.

“This is a day to celebrate the achievements of women. We are not complacent – there is more to be done before we can claim to have ‘created an equal future’. But Wales has much to be proud of and we stand committed to supporting women and girls to aspire and achieve.”