

# Press release: UK Government and Chwarae Teg join forces to #PressforProgress to mark International Women's Day

Governments, business and society must continue to be bold if we are to deliver real change for women in Wales and the world, Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns said today as the UK Government marks International Women's Day (8 March).

This year's theme is #PressforProgress – a call to action for the world to take concrete steps to help achieve gender parity more quickly.

And right across Wales today, men and women alike will take part in impressive programme of rallies, concerts, workshops, conferences and performances to send out the message that continued awareness and action is required to ensure that women's equality is gained and maintained in all aspects of life.

The UK Government in Wales and Welsh gender equality charity Chwarae Teg will play their part on Monday 12 March when they join forces to host an International Women's Day themed business breakfast at the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales in Cardiff Bay.

Giving women and girls the support and opportunities to progress from the classroom right through to the boardroom will top the agenda at the event which will also look at ways to break down workplace barriers and how to build inclusive workplaces for the benefit of the Welsh economy.

## **Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

For too long, not enough has been done to help women to fulfil their true potential. That is something that we, as a Government, have been working hard to address.

The past few months have seen a real sea change in attitudes to women and gender equality, and the UK Government wants to seize and build upon that strength of feeling and drive forward even more change.

That is why I'm delighted to be working together with Chwarae Teg to welcome women together at this event to celebrate the advancement and achievements of women in business, but to also pause and reflect on the many challenges that lie ahead.

## **Chwarae Teg Chief Executive, Cerys Furlong, said:**

Our vision at Chwarae Teg, is for Wales to become a world leader in gender equality. It is only when women have equal representation and equal access to the workplace that the economy of Wales can truly flourish.

Chwarae Teg works with businesses and organisations across Wales to help them to tackle the barriers that women face and to build inclusive workplaces to the benefit of everyone. Women must be seen and heard at all levels and across all of society.

More women at the table means that the issues affecting women are discussed and solutions are found, leading to better services and better legislation for all. Women must also feel safe in the workplace, we want to see a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and abuse leading to a shift in working cultures.

There are now 44,000 more women in work in Wales than there was in 2010, and the UK Government is making significant strides in delivering the changes and creating the conditions required for women from all walks of life who want their horizons broadened and aspirations lifted.

## **How the UK Government is leading by example:**

- The UK has become one of the first countries to introduce gender pay gap (GPG) reporting requirements. This law will mean all large employers have to publish their GPG figure, shining a light on where women are being held back.
- Introducing Shared Parental Leave to offer choice to eligible parents when it comes to childcare, and allow mothers to return to work sooner if they wish to.
- Rolling out tax free childcare schemes benefitting thousands of families in Wales.
- Pledging to end violence against women at home and abroad by introducing tough new laws to protect women from domestic violence, forced marriage and FGM.
- Launching the [Industrial Strategy](#) – a long-term plan to build a Britain fit for the future by helping businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK.

## **Notes to Editors**

- International Women's Day is a day of global celebration marking the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future.
- Chwarae Teg is a charity working in Wales to support the economic development of women as well as working with businesses and organisations to develop and improve working practices