



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

International Women's Day

07 March 2019, DJIBOUTI (Djibouti): The Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) joins its Member States of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda; Other Regional Economic Communities; The African Union; The United Nations and other regional and international organisations on the occasion to mark the International Women's Day (IWD) on 8th March 2019.

Women not only constitute more than half of the IGAD Member States' population, but are also important actors in the socio-economic and political transformation of the region. "We cannot credibly talk about promoting peace, prosperity and integration for sustainable development in the region if half of the population is left behind on account of historical, cultural, bureaucratic, political or other grounds of discrimination and exclusion", observed the IGAD Executive Secretary, H.E. Amb (Eng) Mahboub Maalim.

IGAD Secretariat notes that the frequent droughts coupled with other adverse effects of climate change, peace and security challenges in the region including violent extremism, terrorism, and human trafficking among others have a differential impact on women, men, boys, girls and other demographic categories of the population. This acknowledgement underscores the crucial importance for all duty bearers to pay special attention to inequalities that deepen and intensify vulnerabilities to livelihoods and other shocks.

"The theme for International Women's Day 2019 '*Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change*' is clearly a clarion call that places gender equality and women's empowerment on the critical path of attaining the aspirations contained in the UN Agenda 2030 for sustainable development and the African Union Agenda 2063" remarked H.E. Amb (Eng) Mahboub Maalim.

On this occasion, IGAD Secretariat commends Member States and Partners for the various efforts directed towards empowering women and girls in the region. The Secretariat further pledges to strengthen regional cooperation in addressing shared challenges in this realm, guided by agreed regional and international normative principles and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment.

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