

Wednesday, 28th November 2018

Morning tea for '16 Days in WA' campaign

**Address by the Honourable Kim Beazley AC
Governor of Western Australia**

Thank you to Marie Taylor for the Welcome to Country – a lyrical, beautiful description of the land to which she welcomes us. Thank you.

I would also like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet – the Noongar people – and pay my respects to their elders past and present.

Welcome to Government House.

The international 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign takes place this year against the backdrop of an unprecedented global outcry.

It is fitting that this campaign starts on 25 November – the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women – and ends on 10 December, Human Rights Day.

This year's theme, "Orange the World: #HearMeToo", highlights the voices of survivors and activists across the world. It is the collective responsibility of all Western Australians to support those who are most vulnerable.

Violence against women is the most extreme form of discrimination. It is one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights violations in our world today.

One in three women worldwide experience gender-based violence. Sadly, in our country, most incidents of domestic, family and sexual violence go unreported and because of this, it isn't possible to truly measure the extent of the problem.

Here in Western Australia, we have the second highest rate of reported physical and sexual violence perpetrated against women in the country. Personally, I find this very confronting. We need, can and must do better.

Western Australia will now be a part of a global movement to increase awareness, galvanise advocacy efforts and share knowledge. It is a privilege to be here today supporting such an important event for the Western Australian community.

This international campaign first began in 1991 at the Women's Global Leadership Institute. It was there that 23 female civil society leaders from all over the world decided they wanted to spark international action. Through this, the United Nations Secretary General is now leading a global conversation that enables countries to work together to eliminate gender-based violence worldwide.

Now, more than 25 years later, the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence Campaign is the most widely recognised and longest-running campaign for women's rights in the world. This initial grassroots idea

has flourished with more than 5,000 organisations from approximately 187 countries participating in the campaign every year. I am proud to say that Western Australia is doing its part.

For far too long, impunity, silence and stigma have allowed violence against women to escalate to pandemic proportions.

The time for change is here and now, and as a Western Australian community, we have the chance to add to this global conversation.

We have the chance to not only increase awareness but set an example for our future generations that violence against women is not okay, it will not go unnoticed and it is unacceptable.

Please, may I now introduce the Honourable Mark McGowan MLA, Premier of Western Australia.