The International Day of the Girl Child – October 11, 2016

The world’s 1.1 billion girls are part of a large and vibrant global generation poised to take on the future. Yet, Girls face discrimination and violence every day across the world. The International Day of the Girl Child focuses attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls’ empowerment and the fulfilment of their human rights. We all recognize that the ambition for gender equality in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlights the preponderance of disadvantage and discrimination borne by girls everywhere on a daily basis. Only through explicit focus on collecting and analyzing girl-focused, girl-relevant and sex-disaggregated data, and then using these data to inform key policy and program decisions.

With this in mind, the theme for this year's International Day of the Girl is

Girls' Progress = Goals' Progress: A Global Girl Data Movement.

While we can applaud the ambition and potential of the SDGs for girls, and recognize how girls’ progress is good not only for girls, but also for families, communities and society at large. We must also take this opportunity to consider how existing gaps in data on girls and young women, lack of systematic analysis, and limited use of existing data significantly limit our ability to monitor and communicate the wellbeing and progress of half of humanity.

Last year, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated, "The newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals rightly include key targets for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They offer an opportunity for a global commitment to breaking intergenerational transmission of poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination – and realizing our vision of a life of dignity for all."

- UNICEF, International Day of the Girl Child
- UNICEF "Statistical Snapshot of Violence Against Adolescent Girls" Report
- UN Women, International Day of the Girl Child
- UN Women Special Focus compilation on the Girl Child, one of the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
- Message of Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, UNFPA Executive Director, on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child
- UN Secretary-General Campaign UNiTE to End Violence Against Women

Mrs. Obama will participate in a live global conversation about girls' education on October 11, International Day of the Girl. A Brighter Future: A Global Conversation on Girls Education, will be hosted by Glamour’s The Girl Project. To view the livestream, go to Facebook.com/glamour at 11:30am on October 11.

Mark your calendar (October 12th 9:00pm ET) to watch We Will Rise: Michelle Obama’s Mission to Educate Girls Around the World, a film about girls overcoming incredible odds to achieve their educations, with contributions from First Lady Michelle Obama, actors and activists Meryl Streep, Freida Pinto, and CNN journalist Isha Sesay, filmed in Liberia and Morocco.