



## RC's Statement for International Day to End Violence Against Women

*Date: 25 November 2021*

*“Let us take political risks and strong decisions in addressing the needs of humanity.” - His Majesty The King.*

### **Salutations**

Your Majesty Gyalyum Sangay Choden Wangchuck, Royal Highness Ashi Euphelma

Choden Wangchuck, Lyonpo J.B Rai, distinguished guests, UN colleagues, charos.

## Introduction

- Today, International Day to End Violence Against Women I wish to speak from my heart.
- I apologize for anything I have misunderstood.

I have 2 key messages:

### 1. Bureaucracy can never be an excuse for inaction

- The founding of RENEW in 2004 by Her Majesty was a historical landmark in protecting a key part of Bhutan's vulnerable people.
- RENEW is a great role model for organizational innovation- especially in times of rapid modernization.
- Thank you, Your Majesty, and RENEW for breaking through that cultural and Red Tape Resistance in 2004.
- The people you have helped since 2004 are a testament to your courage- long may ye continue your great work.

### 2. Paro Valley is a special teacher- especially for Bhutan and the whole Himalayas

- This Paro College of Education with its 835 students is a premiere institution in education.
- But Paro Valley is most truly inspirational as a centre for compassion and learning because of Kichu Lakhang and Taksang.
- Chenrezig is the great inspiration to combine heart and mind

- As we deal with the shadow pandemic of gender-based violence, we are constantly reminded of the need for skillful action- not least because we know gender-based violence produces so many other social challenges including increases in mental health cases.
- I trust that Kichu Lakhang, Taksang, Chenrezig, can inspire all teachers and administrators all the days of your lives.
- We know from examples across the world that rapid modernization brings so many challenges which especially affect the younger people.
- So having teachers who are most skilled in combining mind and heart will be a great means of protecting the vulnerable people of Bhutan- especially those who have experienced gender-based violence.

### **Additional Comment**

- I address this to development partners and UN Agencies:  
Let us work extra harder to support MoH, NCWC, NSB, and Renew in the collection and analysis of cases of gender-based violence.
- I believe when we have a weak way of measuring gender-based violence, we are indirectly  
saying gender-based violence is not a priority.

### **Before Closing**

- I request you to join me for 30 seconds of silence for those women, children, and men who have been victims of gender-based violence and also those who perpetrated such violence

- Paro College of Education, thank you for hosting today and for your work on sexual harassment and comprehensive sexuality.
- Thanks to the work of all the stakeholders including MoH, MoE, NCWC, RENEW, JICA, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNODC, WFP, WHO, Police, Judiciary, BCCI, and Media.

*“We must recognize and prioritize the crucial role of women in building peace...That’s why the United Nations continues to stand up for the rights of women and girls around the world...” -SG Quote.*