



*“International Women’s Day is a time to reflect on progress made, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities”*  
United Nations

The United Nations calls for us to consider how to accelerate the 2030 Agenda, building momentum for the effective implementation of the new Sustainable Development Goals,

especially number 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning and goal number 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Against the backdrop of the 2017 International Woman’s Day theme: “Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030”; CANTO is pleased to note that sixty percent (60%) of our Board of Directors comprises women, with the second highest position of Vice Chair being occupied by a woman. It is also remarkable to note that ninety percent (90%) of the Secretariat staff are women which underscore the association’s commitment in encouraging and promoting gender equality.

Here at CANTO, we proudly celebrate the achievements of women and believe that the roadmap for change and gender equality rests on education, training, and the opportunities given in the pursuit of careers including technology, research, politics and culture. We accomplish this by programs that encourage competition on an equal basis – including our Video and Hackathon Competitions. Further to this CANTO, seeks to encourage Women in Tech, encompassing both extremes of the generational spectrum by catering to the youth in joining the ITU in celebrating “Girls in ICT Day” annually and also by incorporating a Caribbean Women in ICT Forum during

our annual conference, which seeks to promote and highlight women in the industry who are game changers.

CANTO members, we are encouraged by the progress women have made over the years, but we are also cognizant of the fact that a lot more needs to be done if we are to play our part in effectively achieving the new Sustainable Development Goals. We need to embrace, empower, support and celebrate women in every sphere of life. Encompassment of women's rights and gender equality, should not only be addressed within the organizational boundaries; but let us strive to delve further within the social boundaries and communities in which we operate and seek to make a difference in the protection of women.

Let us achieve this by reimagining the policies in our organizations to promote gender equality and encourage lifelong learning. As stated by the Secretary General of the UN "women's rights are human rights" and we strongly believe that organizations that promote women's rights are also promoting human rights and are on the right path for success.