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## **Secretary-General, in World Autism Day Awareness Message, Calls for Speaking Out against Discrimination, Ensuring Gender Equality Reaches All Women, Girls**

Following is UN Secretary-General António Guterres' message on World Autism Awareness Day, observed on 2 April:

On World Autism Awareness Day, we stand up for the rights of people with autism and speak out against discrimination.

This year's observance highlights the importance of empowering women and girls with autism. They face multiple challenges, including barriers to accessing education and employment on an equal footing with others, denial of their reproductive rights and the freedom to make their own choices and a lack of involvement in policymaking on matters that concern them.

Our work for gender equality and women's empowerment must reach all the world's women and girls. And our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals must uphold the 2030 Agenda [for Sustainable Development]'s core promise to leave no one behind.

On World Autism Awareness Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to promote the full participation of all people with autism, and ensure they have the necessary support to be able to exercise their rights and fundamental freedoms.