# Template for a 16 days campaign press release:

City, Date: On this International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Lutheran World Federation and [your organization] condemn violence against women and girls in all its forms.

We are equally concerned about escalating violent conflict and war and the associated increase in violence against women and girls globally, as well as the backlash against women's and girls' universal human rights.

The United Nations notes that violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights violations of our time and that it remains largely unreported due to the impunity, silence, stigma and shame surrounding it.

Globally, an estimated 736 million women—almost one in three—have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence, often at the hands of their partners, at least once in their life. [you can add national statistics here] According to UN Women, more than 640 million women aged 15 and older have been subjected to intimate partner violence globally. Most of the violence happens within the cover of the home and is often treated as a private matter. Less than 40 per cent of the women who experience violence seek help of any sort**.**

We re-affirm the important role that faith-based organizations and religious institutions play in shaping attitudes towards women and girls’ rights. In the face of a rise in religious fundamentalism, we renew our commitment to denounce all harmful religious and traditional practices that perpetuate violence against women and girls.

This year, we join the rest of the world in commemorating the global 16 Days campaign, which runs from 25 November to 10 December, under the theme: ***UNITE: Activism to end Violence against Women and Girls***. We recognize that the extent of the problem requires us all to join hands in fighting this global scourge.

As part of this year’s campaign, we will:

* Unite with partners to raise awareness on the extent of violence against women and girls
* Highlight existing initiatives to address the violence in different contexts
* Pressure governments, as primary duty bearers, to take the necessary action to eliminate violence against women and girls
* Engage men and boys, religious leaders and communities to denounce patriarchal attitudes and practices that perpetuate violence against women
* Gather narratives from our traditions on protection and empowerment of women and girls.

Now is the time to act - because **united** we can end violence against women and girls. Let’s break the silence and raise awareness that gender-based violence is a critical human rights issue and a sin.