

ROTARY TASMANIA
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2026 FUNDRAISING LUNCHEON
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FRIDAY 6 MARCH 2026

Good afternoon, everyone. I warmly welcome you all to Government House as we celebrate International Women's Day 2026.

May I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country and recognise their deep connection to land, sea, sky, and waters.

Thank you all for joining us for our third International Women's Day fundraising lunch. May I also thank very much those of you who have supported this lunch each year.

As Governor, I have been committed to raising awareness of women's issues and I am pleased that this event has become a fixture on the Government House calendar.

Each year, International Women's Day events provide us with an opportunity to continue the dialogue on gender equality.

Around the world, millions of women and girls face violence, discrimination, and abuse.¹ The United Nations reports that in 2026, women have only 64 per cent of the legal rights that men hold worldwide.² In many areas of life, including work, family and healthcare, women contend with entrenched obstacles that prevent access to equal justice, such as lack of access to legal support and its cost, and bias and discrimination in institutions.³

¹ [UN Women: International Women's Day 2026](#), accessed 24 February 2026

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

This year, we are being called to join with women and girls to demand equal rights – and equal justice to uphold, exercise, and enjoy those rights.⁴ We are all encouraged to speak out against discrimination and inequality whenever we have the opportunity.

In addition to raising awareness of women's rights, International Women's Day events are a vital way to raise funds to support women locally and internationally.

Today, I am delighted that we are raising funds to help women in Tasmania through the Rotary Tasmania Gynaecological Cancer Project.

In your booklet there is information about this Project and gynaecological cancers.

The Project increases awareness around these cancers, supports Tasmanian women affected by them, and raises funds to help patients access vital medical treatment they may otherwise be unable to access.

I was so pleased to celebrate the launch of the Project here at Government House in 2023, and now, through today's lunch, we can provide further support for women facing the challenges of this terrible disease.

May I commend Past District Governor Bob Calvert and all at Rotary Tasmania for championing this Project. I also thank everyone for coming today to help raise funds for this important cause.

Later, we shall hear from Bob and also enjoy an uplifting performance from our wonderful Hobart Harmony Chorus.

Please now enjoy your lunch.

Thank you.

⁴ Ibid.