



Canadian Federation of University Women
Fédération Canadienne des Femmes Diplômées des Universités

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October 4, 2013

The Honourable John Baird, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Foreign Affairs
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0G2
Canada

Dear Minister Baird:

Re: Acceptance and Rejection of Universal Periodic Review Recommendations

The Canadian Federation of University Women is concerned that the Government of Canada has rejected many important recommendations made during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, including the specific recommendations that Canada undertake a public inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, and develop a national action plan to address gender-based violence.

Although CFUW is pleased that the Government of Canada accepted many of the recommendations pertaining to women, education, and human trafficking, and we look forward to learning how the Government of Canada intends to implement those recommendations, we remain extremely concerned by the rejection of many of the recommendations pertaining to violence against women and girls.

CFUW participated in UPR consultations held by the Continuing Committee of Officials on Human Rights in early June to present our views on the recommendations Canada received, and offered input on how those recommendations could be implemented. It was clear from stakeholder feedback that the recommendations related to violence against women should be given priority, particularly the recommendations the Government of Canada has rejected. We are very disappointed that this feedback was not reflected in the Government of Canada's response to the United Nations on September 19, 2013.

In Canada's response to the United Nations, the Government of Canada stated that it is committed to working with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups to prevent and end violence against women and girls; yet the recommendations these stakeholders have strongly supported were rejected.

While some provinces and territories have begun developing their own action plans to address forms of violence against women, coordination, consistency and resources across the country are severely lacking. Combined with the patchwork of funding for time-limited projects to respond to gender-based violence through Status of Women Canada, Public Safety and other departments, this approach is considered by experts working in this field, and CFUW, to be simply insufficient to address the complex set of causes leading to violence against women and girls in Canada.

We sincerely hope that the Government of Canada will reconsider its stance on initiating a public inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women, and developing a national action plan on violence against women and girls including sufficient and stable funding to support such a plan.

CFUW is a non-partisan, voluntary, self-funded organization with over 100 CFUW Clubs, located in every province across Canada. Since its founding in 1919, CFUW has been working to improve the status of women, and to promote human rights, public education, social justice, and peace. CFUW is the largest affiliate of the International Federation of University Women ([IFUW](#)), the leading girls' and women's global organization run by and for women, advocating for women's rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susan Murphy
President, Canadian Federation of University Women

Cc:

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Canada
The Honourable James Moore, P.C., M.P., Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages
Mr. Paul Dewar, M.P., Official Opposition Foreign Affairs Critic
Mr. Marc Garneau, M.P., Liberal Party of Canada Foreign Affairs Critic
Mr. Wayne Marston, M.P., Official Opposition Human Rights Critic
The Honourable Irwin Cotler, M.P., Liberal Party of Canada Rights and Freedoms Critic
Ms. Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada
Ms. Niki Ashton, M.P., Official Opposition Status of Women Critic
Ms. Kirsty Duncan, M.P., Liberal Party of Canada Status of Women Critic