

Statement



On December 6 we mark the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women. This day is marked every year in Canada to remember the 14 women who were killed at École Polytechnique in Montreal on December 6, 1989, and to recognize the continuing struggle for societal equality between women and men.

This year, Unifor commemorates the 30th anniversary of the Montreal Massacre by taking time to reflect on the gender-based violence and harassment that unacceptably continues in our society and to commit to individual and collective actions to make change.

The 2019 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry report set out 231 Calls for Justice. At our Constitutional Convention, we adopted a resolution to call upon federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to fully adopt the Report and implement the Calls for Justice. We also committed to using our education programs to further truth and reconciliation, including acknowledging the reality of violence against Indigenous women, girls and two-spirited people.

Unifor will be pressing for Canada's ratification of the International Labour Organization *Convention on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work* (C.190). This Convention provides a clear framework for action. It is based on a future of work grounded in dignity and respect, free from violence and harassment. This marks the first time the universal right to a world of work free from violence and harassment has been clearly articulated in an international treaty. We join the international trade union movement in calling for swift ratification around the world.

Unifor is also calling for Canada to develop a National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence. A National Action Plan would ensure a shared understanding of the root causes of gender-based violence as well as put in place coordinated and effective efforts across the federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal levels.

We know that in addition to taking on violence and harassment directly, we must also push for systemic gender equality initiatives that give women and girls the economic security to make their own choices in life; initiatives such as access to good jobs, pay equity and universal child care.

Strong equity laws, social programs and policies are key components of eliminating gender-based violence. As a union we commit to striving for them, not just on December 6, but every day.