



Status of Women Canada    Condition féminine  
Canada

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**Statement by**

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**to**

**the Expert Group Meeting on**  
**“Peace agreements as a means for promoting gender equality**  
**and ensuring participation of women – A framework of model**  
**provisions”**

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REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE UNITED NATIONS, DISTINGUISHED EXPERTS, OBSERVERS, AND COLLEAGUES,

On behalf of the Coordinator of Status of Women Canada (SWC), I am honoured to welcome you all to Canada as participants at this important meeting of experts.

At this time I would like to acknowledge the representatives of the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the UN Department of Political Affairs and, of course, my colleagues from the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and extend my thanks for organizing this event. Even more important, I want to acknowledge you, the experts, whose insight and experience is so valuable. I look forward to reading your reports and learning of your recommendations at the conclusion of this meeting.

Je me réjouis d'avoir l'occasion de m'adresser à vous à cette étape de la préparation de la prochaine séance de la Commission de la condition de la femme des Nations Unies. Condition féminine Canada est le ministère fédéral responsable de promouvoir l'égalité entre les sexes au Canada en renforçant l'engagement du gouvernement du Canada à bâtir une société qui soit inclusive et respectueuse de l'ensemble des Canadiennes et Canadiens. We are actively involved in Canada's preparation and participation in the annual UNCSW, working closely with the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT).

As you know, Canada has been a long-time supporter of and contributor to the important work of the Commission. We recognize the significant role the Commission continues to play in improving the situation of women around the world, and promoting gender equality in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields. We also appreciate the leadership the Commission provides in the implementation of the Platform for Action and in mainstreaming a gender perspective throughout the UN system, through ongoing system-wide connection and coordination with other entities of the UN.

Canada strongly supports the international legal framework for the protection and promotion of women's human rights. Canada ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1981 and recently acceded to the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, which will enhance the legal framework of human rights protection for women in Canada. The CEDAW reporting process is especially valuable in assisting ongoing efforts by governments to advance gender equality and women's enjoyment of their rights. In January of this year, Canada presented its fifth periodic report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in New York. It received a mixed review. While praising Canada for the strides made in advancing the rights of women, the Committee also highlighted areas where further work is needed. As we build on the commitments from the Beijing Platform for Action and Canada's own Agenda for Gender Equality, we will be addressing the concerns of the CEDAW Committee.

L'actualité nous rappelle la pertinence des engagements gouvernementaux, comme ceux qui ont été pris à Beijing, au Caire et à Copenhague et qui feront l'objet d'un examen après cinq ans. Nous devons maintenir avec vigilance la fermeté de nos engagements internationaux en matière d'égalité entre les sexes et porter une attention particulière à leur mise en oeuvre.

Over the next few days you will be discussing “peace agreements as a means for promoting gender equality and ensuring participation of women” and working to “formulate a framework of model provisions for the promotion of gender equality and the participation of women, for use in future peace agreements.”

Your deliberations, and those at the upcoming session of the UNCSW are timely indeed. Nearly 10 years ago when some of us met in Beijing, the world was a different place. As we now face the combination of increased focus on threats to global security and ongoing civil conflicts, it is critical that gender equality and women’s human rights do not fall off the agenda, at either the international or national levels.

We know that women’s human rights are integral to peace and security, and women’s involvement in reconstruction and reconciliation efforts are essential to their success. This was reinforced in Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This landmark resolution adopted just over three years ago (October 31, 2000) addresses the need for full and equal participation of women in peace processes and peacebuilding activities, and gender-sensitive training for personnel involved in peace-support operations.

Canada has not known the types of conflict that occur daily in many parts of the world. However, it is strongly committed to strengthening the international community's ability to respond to threats to human security and supporting peaceful governance. In particular, it remains committed to international women's equality and women's human rights and strongly believes in making sure that Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security is implemented, both domestically and internationally. With the Beijing Platform for Action as its reference point, Canada, with other Member States of the United Nations and other regional and international organizations, has actively worked to integrate a gender-sensitive approach to peacebuilding and human security efforts and to ensure that women and men benefit equally from peacebuilding efforts. Canada will take an active role in the discussions surrounding this issue at the upcoming session of the UNCSW.

Le travail que vous accomplirez est très important. Les recommandations qui découleront de cette réunion seront extrêmement précieuses, car elles contribueront aux discussions qui auront lieu à la prochaine séance de la Commission.

I wish you a very successful meeting and a wonderful stay in Ottawa. I look forward to your conclusions.

**THANK YOU.**