



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

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The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons, Ottawa. Ontario K1A 0A6

October 4, 2011

RE: Request for support to ensure that Afghan Women are present at the Bonn Meetings

Dear Mr. Harper:

The Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) applauds your government's continued support for the development and emancipation of Afghan women. CFUW is confident that Canada will have a strong voice at the Bonn meetings in support of women.

As signatories to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent UNSC Resolutions dealing with women in conflict situations, CFUW asks that your Government call for the presence of Afghan women at the negotiating table at the meetings in Bonn.

CFUW supports UNSCR 1325, 1820, 1882, 1888, 1889 and the UN Conventions that speak to women's equality, empowerment, human rights, and protection under the law and to their full participation in civil society and in government. CFUW also promotes the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The time has come to reclaim children from the violence of war and to ensure that women are an integral part of the peace negotiations and follow-up process.

Canada has often demonstrated its strength internationally as a negotiator in the resolution of conflict. Achieving a culture of peace must be the primary goal in paving the way towards equality, democracy and stability for all and for building a safe, non-violent future for women and children.

At a Symposium on October 1 in Oakville, Ontario CFUW members and others heard Afghan speakers talk about the improvements made over the last decade and say that these gains must not be eroded in the forthcoming peace negotiations with the Taliban and other participants.

CFUW believes that any political settlement must explicitly guarantee women's rights to education, health and personal security. Measures of accountability need to be legislated and enforced.

CFUW co-founded, in 1919, the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) to promote peace and understanding among nations. CFUW is a non-partisan, voluntary, self-funded, bilingual and non-governmental organization of close to 10,000 women graduates and students from every province across Canada, who work to improve the status of women and girls, education, peace, justice and human rights. CFUW holds special consultative status at the United Nations (ECOSOC) and belongs to the Sectoral Committee on Education of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. CFUW is the largest of 67 national affiliates of the International Federation of University Women (IFUW).

CFUW members trust that your government will not allow the huge Canadian investment in Afghanistan to be subsumed under the perceived necessity of appeasing the Taliban. We look forward to hearing that you have been successful.

Yours sincerely,

Brenda Wallace

Brenda Wallace, President Canadian Federation of University Women

cc.

The Honourable John Baird	Minister for Foreign Affairs
The Honourable Bev Oda	Minister for International Cooperation
The Honourable Rona Ambrose	Minister responsible for the Status of Women
The Honourable Bob Rae	Leader, Liberal Party of Canada
Ms Nycole Turmel	Leader, New Democratic Party
Mr. Paul Dewar	Foreign Affairs Critic, New Democratic Party of Canada
Ms Elizabeth May	Leader, The Green Party
Ms Helene Laverdiere	Foreign Affairs Critic, New Democratic Party of Canada
Ms Francoise Boivin	Status of Women Critic, New Democratic Party of Canada
The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc	Foreign Affairs Critic, the Liberal Party of Canada
The Honourable Judy Sgro	Status of Women Critic, the Liberal Party of Canada
Dr. Caroline Bennett	