

November 21, 2023

To: The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, P.C., M.P., ministre-minister@ec.gc.caTo: Ms. Catherine Stewart, catherine.stewart@ec.gc.ca**Re: COP28 and the Need for a Gender-Sensitive Approach**

Dear Minister Steven Guilbeault and Ms. Catherine Stewart,

I am writing on behalf of CFUW, a non-partisan, self-funded organization with 94 clubs across Canada and over 6,600 members. CFUW is the largest affiliate of Graduate Women International and holds special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Our mission is to achieve educational and economic equality and social justice through continuous learning and empowerment. As a key element of our mission, CFUW has long advocated for environmental protection and conservation, recognizing that a clean, safe, and sustainable environment is a human right to which everyone is entitled.

At the upcoming COP28 Conference, we hope that the Canadian delegation will represent the voices of our members and millions of others who would like to see Canada adopt a leading role in mitigating climate change.

The theme of Day 5 of the conference is "Finance / Trade / Gender Equality and Accountability Commitments." A main objective of this day is to "promote a gender-just transition by advocating for equal opportunities for decent work in impacted and emerging green sectors, supported by gender-disaggregated data and gender-responsive finance." The inclusion of this objective at COP28 is critical, as women are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of climate change. This is in large part due to the fact that women are more likely to live in poverty and to depend on natural resources for employment, especially agriculture. Women also face heightened risks of displacement and gender-based violence as a result of crises induced by climate change. At the same time, women remain underrepresented in political and economic decision-making processes, barring them from fully contributing to climate-related policy planning and implementation.

We encourage the Canadian delegation to bring a gender-sensitive approach to *all* discussions and negotiations throughout the conference, not only on Day 5. All strategies to address, mitigate, and adapt to climate change must consider the impact on vulnerable populations, and meaningfully involve women in the decision-making process. In particular, we urge you and all states at COP28 to commit to the following actions:

1. Integrate Gender-Based Analysis Plus into the formulation and implementation of Nationally Determined Contribution plans.

2. Ensure that all monitoring and reporting processes include the collection of disaggregated data and gender equality indicators.
3. Conceptualize climate change as a security risk, to be addressed according to the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.
4. Direct at least 25% of humanitarian funding to grassroots organizations, with a particular focus on Indigenous- and women-led organizations that work to help communities adapt to the effects of climate change.
5. Accelerate the transition away from non-renewable energy by retraining and reskilling workers in the energy sector and investing in renewable energy research and education.
6. Create and communicate opportunities for women, Indigenous peoples, youth, and civil society organizations to participate in ongoing consultations regarding environmental issues addressed at COP28 and beyond.

CFUW will be attentive to the decisions made and actions taken at COP28 and the role that Canada plays at the conference. Thank you for the work you are doing to address climate change.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joy Hurst". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joy Hurst
President, CFUW