

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – CFUW responds to 2021 Speech from the Throne

**Ottawa**, 23 November 2021 – Tuesday’s highly anticipated Speech from the Throne opened the first session of Canada’s 44<sup>th</sup> Parliament. In a historic moment, Governor General Mary Simon, the first Indigenous person to hold this position, delivered the speech in English, French, and Inuktitut. The speech introduced the Government’s plan for “Building a resilient economy: a cleaner & healthier future for our kids”. [Click here](#) to read the full speech.

The Speech introduced the government’s promises of bringing an end to the pandemic, growing the economy, fighting climate change, working toward reconciliation, and creating a more just and equitable world. While the Throne Speech made many commendable promises, we must continue our advocacy to ensure these promises are kept.

A number of **CFUW priorities were addressed in the Throne Speech**, below are just a few. Let’s hold the government accountable in fulfilling them.

- **Early Learning & Child Care:** The Speech promised to continue building a Canada-wide early learning and childcare system – acknowledging how affordable child care is “not just good for families. It helps grow the entire economy.” New Brunswick, Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and Ontario all have yet to sign an agreement with the federal government to deliver \$10-a-day child care.
- **Climate Change:** The speech also discussed action on climate change by acknowledging plans “to cap and cut oil and gas sector emissions...”, “investing in public transit...”, and “protecting our land and oceans” to address biodiversity loss through Canada’s first-ever National Adaptation Strategy. CFUW was encouraged to see the government commit to “strengthen[ing] its partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, to protect nature and respect their traditional knowledge.”
- **Gender-Based Violence:** The government acknowledged and denounced the unprecedented rise in violence against women and girls during the pandemic and expressed a commitment to move forward with the long-awaited National Action Plan on Violence against Women and Gender-Based Violence. Action on gun violence was addressed, including a plan to introduce a mandatory buyback of banned assault-style weapons and a commitment to move forward with any jurisdiction that wants to ban handguns.
- **Indigenous Peoples’ Rights:** CFUW was also encouraged to hear that “fighting systemic racism, sexism, discrimination, misconduct, and abuse... will remain a key priority,” for the government. The Speech reintroduced a “whole-of-government approach” to reconciliation and plans to “invest significantly” in an Indigenous-led mental health and wellness strategy for survivors of residential schools and their families. Lastly, the Speech committed to increasing Canada’s foreign assistance budget and to continue investing in “sustainable, equitable, and feminist development” to promote gender equality around the world.

Now is an important time for CFUW Clubs across Canada to make sure these promises translate into meaningful policy change. Unfortunately, plans for universal pharmacare, basic income, and reform in Canada’s long-term care sector were absent from the Throne Speech. While the Speech from the Throne customarily does not include detailed action plans, now is a crucial time for CFUW members to raise their voices and hold our government accountable. Let’s promote CFUW priorities to our elected officials by writing letters, signing petitions from partner organizations, writing Op-Eds in our local newspapers, and/or sharing news about issues we care about. Let’s demonstrate *the Power of Women Working Together*.