

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## **Remembering the Victims of the Ecole Polytechnique Massacre and a Renewed Call for Action on Femicide**

Ottawa, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Today is the 33<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the mass shooting, femicide, and gender-based violence (GBV) that we remember as the Polytechnique Massacre in Montréal, Quebec.

We remember the women who lost their lives:

- Geneviève Bergeron
- Hélène Colgan
- Nathalie Croteau
- Barbara Daigneault
- Anne-Marie Edward
- Maud Haviernick
- Maryse Laganière
- Maryse Leclair
- Anne-Marie Lemay
- Sonia Pelletier
- Michèle Richard
- Annie St-Arneault
- Annie Turcotte
- Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz

It is in this grief, on the National Day of Action and Remembrance on Violence against Women, that we reissue the call for the Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments to take immediate action to prevent further femicide in Canada, particularly for women most at risk, such as Indigenous women and girls.

UN Women defines femicide as “as an intentional killing with a gender-related motivation, femicide may be driven by stereotyped gender roles, discrimination towards women and girls, unequal power relations between women and men, or harmful social norms.”

Recent murder charges have revealed serial killings of Indigenous women (Morgan Beatrice Harris, Mercedes Myran, Rebecca Contois, and an unidentified woman). Hundreds of families continue to mourn without answers as their loved ones join the long list of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirited (MMIWG2S+).

In Canada, we are seeing a 26% increase in the killings of women and girls from 2019 to 2021, where the number of women and girls killed in Canada has reached 162 in 2022 (Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability). We commend action being seen in the 2022 Progress Report, and echo the urgent calls for action:

- the need for public awareness and training;

- the provision of immediate support services for survivors and family members of MMIWG2S+ people,
- and the creation of an oversight body.

The lack of an accountability mechanism to ensure implementation of the National Action Plan to address the calls for justice has been identified as a major gap ([2022 Progress Report](#)).

We recall the 100 civil society policy recommendations detailed in the *[Report to Guide the Implementation of a National Action Plan on Violence against Women and Gender-Based Violence](#)*, which provides a ready roadmap for the federal government to begin implementing community-based anti-violence strategies. We also recall the [231 Calls for Justice in the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report](#).

The mass femicide at the Polytechnique Massacre shocked Canada into an awareness of femicide that it may not have had before. The recent murder of four Indigenous women in Winnipeg adds to the long list of sorrow and anger over inaction about femicide in Canada. CFUW, along with many allies, hopes that our sisters, children and grandchildren will live in a safer world, free from gender- based violence.

#### **About CFUW**

CFUW is a non-partisan, voluntary, self-funded organization with over 95 CFUW Clubs, located in every province across Canada. Since its founding in 1919, CFUW has been working to improve the status of women, and to promote human rights, public education, social justice, and peace.

#### **For more information, please contact**

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