2015-2016 PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Proposed amendments must be received by March 31, 2016.

The forms should be completed and e-mailed as Microsoft Word attachments. In order to assist us with organizing the amendments, please remember to save the file with a name that includes the resolution number and your clubs name. For example, RESOLUTION 1 AMENDMENT VANCOUVER.DOC.

For further information on the amendment process, including proposers responsibilities and the procedure at the AGM, please consult relevant pages of the resolution guidelines.

Please send your amendments to the following e-mail addresses, where applicable:

Resolution Number and E-mail	Proposing Body	Title	Pages
Resolution 1 resolution1@fcfdu.org	CFUW Barrie and District	Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls – Ending the Marginalization of Indigenous Women in Canadian Society	2 - 5
Resolution 2 resolution2@fcfdu.org	CFUW Guelph & CFUW Kitchener Waterloo	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) – Diagnosis, Intervention and Support Plan for children, adults and families affected by FASD	6 - 11
Resolution 3 resolution3@fcfdu.org	CFUW Owen Sound and Area	Strengthen the Pest Management Regulatory Agency in Order to Protect the Environment	12 - 14
Resolution 4 resolution4@fcfdu.org	CFUW Leaside-East York & CFUW Etobicoke	Electoral Reform: Adding Proportionality to the Electoral System in Canada	15 – 21
Resolution 5 resolution5@fcfdu.org	Advocacy Committee	Sustainable Development Goals	22 - 27

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls - Ending the Marginalization of Indigenous Women in Canadian Society
Proposed by: CFUW Barrie & District

RESOLVED that the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the Government of Canada to adopt and implement the recommendations of the Amnesty International 2004 report: Stolen Sisters: Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous Women in Canada.

RESOLVED that CFUW urge the Government of Canada to engage the expertise of Indigenous leaders and women's organizations in order to establish effective mechanisms to combat violence against Indigenous women and girls.

RESOLVED that CFUW urge the Government of Canada to provide a status report to Canadians outlining progress made in reducing violence against Indigenous women and girls by January 2017 and annually thereafter.

RELATED POLICIES: None strictly related to Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada

BACKGROUND

Amnesty International 2004 Summary on the Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous Women [1], reviewed various commissions and inquiries, and outlined many of the issues Indigenous women and girls faced and continue to face today. Racism, discrimination, social and economic marginalization, and poor government policy are considered the root causes which have resulted in a disproportionate number of Indigenous females living in extreme poverty and homelessness thus making them vulnerable to exploitation and extreme brutality due to the social indifference to their safety and welfare.

At that time Amnesty International urged Canadian officials at all levels of government to implement the following recommendations:

1. Acknowledge the seriousness of the problem
2. Support research into the extent and causes of violence against Indigenous women
3. Take immediate action to protect women at greatest risk
4. Provide training and resources for police to make prevention of violence against Indigenous women a genuine priority
5. Address the social and economic factors that lead to Indigenous women's extreme vulnerability to violence
6. End the marginalization on Indigenous women in Canadian society

Yet, there has been little or no progress to report. The numbers of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls have continued to increase; by 2012 1,181 Indigenous women were missing (164) or murdered (1,017) with 225 unsolved cases, significantly more than other

Canadian females. The rate of victimization of Indigenous women and girls continues to be much higher than non-Indigenous women and girls.

The issue has attracted international attention and grave concern. For instance: in March 2015 the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) issued a report highly critical of Canada's record of inaction on the issue [2.] The report was strongly supported by the United Nations Human Rights Commission [3] and Amnesty International [4]. The Feminist Alliance for International Action (FIFA) has also urged action [5.]

In 2014 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights reported on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women in British Columbia and strongly urged Canada to take action [6.] As a member of the Organization of American States, Canada has a legal obligation under, "the OAS Charter and the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man" to perform due diligence and implement measures to address these social and economic disparities. These measures must also address the factors associated with the racial and gender discrimination as a result of past and current institutional and structural inequalities.

Canada is fast becoming an international pariah for its refusal to take effective action against this egregious discrimination and violence against Indigenous women and girls. There is no time to waste; we need CFUW policy on the issue if we are to support effective action.

Canada's recent responses to national and international demands include the RCMP's 2014 report [7] Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operational Overview Report. This report identified key risk factors such as employment status, social assistance, use of intoxicants, and sex trade involvement. Recommendations included: enhancing the efforts to solve these cases including sharing of information with all police jurisdictions, focus on prevention efforts especially in high risk communities/areas, increased public awareness, and strengthening the data.

In 2014 Status of Women Canada introduced its "Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crimes against Aboriginal Women and Girls" [8.]

First Nations peoples have advocated strenuously for an inquiry and proposed action plans to address the situation [9.] According to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), there are substantial milestones that an inquiry could achieve: improving social services in First Nations Communities; better coordination with the justice system and ensuring family members of missing and murdered women and girls are heard.

Sisters in Spirit, Native Women's Association of Canada has been a research, education and policy initiative driven and led by indigenous women within the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). The primary goal was to conduct research and raise awareness of the alarmingly high rates of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada. The first phase of the SIS initiative, which began in 2005, conducted ongoing research that gathered statistical information on violence against Indigenous females. These initiatives asked the Government of Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, to work on the eradication of violence within Native communities by addressing the root and systemic causes of violence as identified by the interim report of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, to reconsider the need for a national action plan and to make targeted sustainable funds and resources available to experts working in partnership with Native people.

But little has changed. Murders and missing women and girls in the indigenous communities in Canada continue to make headlines across the country. It is now over 11 years since the first Stolen Sisters report and there are almost 1200 cases in total of Indigenous women and girls who have been the targets or victims of violence. Our government must commit to a national strategy to improve the conditions that have perpetuated this tragic phenomenon.

We, as Canadian women, recognize the travesty of this ongoing situation. We need to speak out and alert Canadians of the underlying right of all women, including Indigenous women and girls, to be protected against violence. As Canadian women who are shocked and grieved by the ongoing violence and inaction, we must show our support and willingness to contribute to the critical changes that must occur.

It is time for the Government of Canada to take the lead and to create a dialogue with Indigenous leaders, including women, to solve the systemic problems which government policies and social and economic marginalization have exacerbated.

Canada, as a member of the Organization of American States, has an obligation to perform due diligence by implementing measures and policies that address the social and economic disparities of Indigenous people, especially women and girls.

Indigenous women and girls, and all Canadians, need an assurance that tangible results are being realized.

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2. United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women   (2015) Report of the inquiry concerning Canada of the Committee of the Elimination of Discrimination against Women under article 8 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women ADVANCE UNEDITED VERSION. Retrieved April 17 at http://www.fafia-afai.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/CEDAW_C_OP-8_CAN_1_7643_E.pdf

3. UNHCR (2015) Canada's failure to effectively address murder and disappearance of Aboriginal women 'grave rights violation' - UN experts - http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15656&LangID=E

4. Amnesty International (March 2015). Missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls: Federal government response to UN expert committee finding of "grave human rights violations" shockingly inadequate

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http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/5-things-an-inquiry-into-missing-murdered-indigenous-women-could-achieve-1.2954279

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) – Diagnosis, intervention and support plan for children, adults and families affected by FASD

Proposed by: CFUW Guelph and CFUW Kitchener-Waterloo

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urges federal, provincial, territorial, regional and municipal governments of Canada to work together to develop, implement and fund a comprehensive early recognition and diagnosis, intervention and support plan for children, youth and adults with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) which includes:

1. On-going training for all direct service workers (a-e) based on the application of FASD-informed scientific knowledge of the brain, development and learning, to educational practices (brain-based education) for:
     a. Medical professionals
     b. Education professionals
     c. Social Service Professionals
     d. Child and Youth Care Professionals (adoption/child protection services)
     e. Judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police, correctional officers and other staff, including probation and parole officers
2. Lifetime support plans for all individuals with FASD
3. FASD-informed family support and respite
4. FASD-informed plan for correctional facilities
5. Specialized plans for Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit and *MÉTIS*) communities, on and off reserve, based on recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge federal, provincial, territorial, regional and municipal governments of Canada to work together to provide access to timely and accessible multi-disciplinary FASD diagnosis in communities across Canada.

RELATED POLICIES:

Fetal (Foetal) Alcohol Syndrome - Impact of Consumption on Foetal Health. CFUW, 1993. CFUW Kincardine (Ontario);

BACKGROUND

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is the term used to describe a variety of brain injuries and developmental disabilities caused by prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE). Estimates of FASD incidences, the most common preventable birth defect in Canada, range from 1.3% to 4.3% of the population (Thanh et al., 2014; PHAC 2005). While our 1993 Policy focuses on FASD prevention through publicity, this resolution focuses on the treatment and management of the consequences of this disability in individuals with FASD.

Brain damage caused by FASD is irreversible and affects the prefrontal cortex which governs executive function and the cognitive processes associated with it. Individuals may experience a range of behavioural, mental or physical conditions including poor judgment skills

and the inability to understand the consequences of actions, as well as the inability to control inhibition or plan. Treatment must focus on managing the consequences of the disability rather than curing it. Without intervention, these individuals are at risk of failing in family and social interactions, in school, at work, and too often end up before criminal courts. Providing professionals and family members with appropriate tools for intervention will not only help the individual with FASD live a productive life, it will prevent needless grief and frustration for the family and save substantial costs to society.

Until recently, the main criteria for FASD diagnosis have been the craniofacial abnormalities evident at birth (Coles 1994). There are also a wide variety of neurocognitive deficits associated with FASD. Although some individuals with FASD may display the characteristic facial dysmorphia, for the majority of individuals with brain damage caused by PAE, FASD is an invisible disability (FASD ONE 2014). In the absence of full facial dysmorphia, a FASD diagnosis can only be given if maternal consumption of alcohol during pregnancy is confirmed. But underreporting, due to social stigma or to separation of mother and child, (Douzgou et al 2012) means that too many individuals are never diagnosed and never receive the support they need.

A 2013 study reported slightly higher rates of diagnosis among children living in low income situations or experiencing food insecurity, and much higher rates among children requiring foster care services (Werk et al., 2013). In fact, 74% of children assessed for FASD were in foster care or lived with adoptive parents (Douzgou et al., 2012). Clearly, additional resources, education, training, support and services for FASD related challenges for foster and adoptive parents are essential to optimize outcomes for children with FASD (Werk et al., 2013).

> *Over 60% of people with FASD have had trouble with the law and over 40% of adults with FASD have been incarcerated at some point in their lives (Streissguth et al. 1996). The prevalence of FASD in the Canadian justice system is ten times higher than in the general population (Thanh and Jonsson 2015).*

Rates of FASD vary significantly among Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit and *MÉTIS*) communities; the high FASD rates reported in some communities are by no means a reflection of them all (Pacey 2009). Still, the generational effects of colonization and separation may place Aboriginal women at a higher risk of entering pregnancy with substance abuse problems (Stout and Peters, 2011). One in four Aboriginal children living with foster parents had received an FASD diagnosis (Werk et al 2013).

FASD imposes a significant social and financial burden on affected individuals, their families and on society in general. Individuals with FASD have complex medical and social needs which results in higher utilization of services in the health, social services and education sectors. Compared to the general population, individuals with FASD are almost twice as likely to require income assistance and 10 times as likely to be involved with child welfare services (Brownell et al 2013). The high rate of behavioural disorders and the large number of children in care means that rates of social service support to families with individuals with FASD are significantly higher than in the general population (Brownell et al 2013). The estimated annual cost of FASD to the Canadian economy is approximately $9.7 billion (Thanh and Jonsson 2015). Of this, the current costs to the Criminal Justice System accounts for 40%, healthcare 21%, education 17%, social services 13%, and others 9% (Thanh and Jonsson 2015).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Secondary prevention (i.e. reduction of disability among individuals with prenatal alcohol exposure) begins with accurate diagnoses and access to interventions that meet patients' needs (Astley 2013). We recommend that CFUW policy include the development of nationally integrated early diagnosis/recognition and intervention/support plans. To help affected individuals and families in the most efficient way possible, service workers must receive regular training/retraining on the most effective brain-based FASD interventions currently available.

Training for:

1. **Medical professionals**: Almost 70% of medical students and clinical providers believe there is no safe amount of alcohol consumption during pregnancy. But less than 40% of them survey pregnant women about their alcohol consumption (Arnold et al 2013).
2. **Education professionals**: Early intervention and supports are key for all children displaying a learning disability. Children with FASD not only exhibit learning disabilities but also behavioural deficits which can contribute to them falling behind in school. However, once children fall behind, the gap only widens over time (Chatterji, 2006). Therefore, it is important to equip teachers and other educational professionals with FASD-appropriate training and tools to enable them to deliver effective interventions and supports.
3. **Social Service Professionals**: Although service professionals are knowledgeable about primary prevention of FASD, they reported minimal knowledge of its epidemiology and how to recognize and work with children with FASD (Caley et al 2008).
4. **Child and Youth Care Professionals** (adoption and child protection services).
5. **Judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police, correctional officers** and other staff including probation and parole officers.

Lifetime support plans for all individuals with FASD: Characteristics of intervention programs for individuals with FASD are consistent with a positive behaviour support framework and must be available to individuals across their lifespan, prevention focused, individualized, comprehensive and coordinated across systems and developmental stages (Petrenko et al 2014). Collaborative efforts from clinicians, researchers, funding agencies, and policy makers are essential to advance the rigor and availability of evidence-based preventive interventions for individuals with FASD (Petrenko et al 2014).

FASD-informed family support and respite: In addition to behavioural difficulties and/or challenges, the most common concern reported by caregivers of children with FASD was insufficient support and/or knowledge from health and social professionals and agencies. These unmet needs compromise the quality of life for these caregivers, their children, and their families. It is essential to develop intervention programs that provide a family-centered approach to training, education, and support for children with FASD and for their families (Green et al 2014).

FASD-informed plan for correctional facilities: In March 2014, Bill C-583, which would have allowed the court to consider FASD as a mitigating factor, was referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights for study. The proposal of this bill demonstrates public support for change in the treatment of prisoners with FASD. Therefore, all correctional staff should be provided with intervention training for FASD thus assuring that prisoners with FASD can fully benefit from rehabilitation services.

Specialized plan for Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) communities: For some Aboriginal women, FASD may be a multi-generational problem where pregnant women and young mothers themselves may be prenatally affected by alcohol. Programs and tools must be designed to address their needs (Van Bibber M. Personal communication, June 8, 2002 in Masotti et al 2003). In collaboration with Aboriginal people, FASD preventive programs should be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner. Reforms to the criminal justice system should include: 1) increased community resources and powers for courts to ensure that FASD is properly diagnosed, and that appropriate community supports are in place for individuals affected by FASD, 2) enacting statutory exemptions from mandatory minimum sentences of imprisonment for offenders affected by FASD, 3) providing community, correctional, and parole resources to maximize the ability of people with FASD to live in the community (TRCC 2015).

Timely and accessible multi-disciplinary FASD diagnosis in communities across Canada: Discrepancies in FASD diagnostic criteria result in inaccurate estimates of incidence and prevalence and risk compromising the future healthcare of affected individuals with regards to intervention, counselling and treatment (Farag 2014). Over 80% of cases of FASD are diagnosed after the age of 6, when they are already in school and already falling behind; children with FASD need to have an early and accurate diagnosis so as to utilize services and support plans (Streissguth et al 1996).

The publication of FASD Canadian Guidelines for Diagnosis in 2005 was intended to encourage a consistent interdisciplinary team approach and diagnostic procedure for FASD diagnosis. Significant funding gaps in many provinces and territories have resulted in a 20% decline in the number of clinics offering FASD multidisciplinary diagnostics, with less than half of them reporting a full staff of professionals (Clarren et al 2011). In addition, less than 75% of the clinics used the diagnostic schema proposed in the guidelines, indicating a significant gap in either education or resources, or both (Clarren et al 2011).

Evidence supports the concept that appropriate intervention can help individuals with FASD once the disorder is properly identified (Bertrand et al., 2004; Vargus-Adams, 2006). The quality of care and resultant outcomes for individuals with FASD will improve as rehabilitation professionals receive additional training to recognize   individuals with FASD so as to refer them for further assessment (Birch et al 2015). In fact, researchers recommend that FASD education be integrated into formal training, including entry-level and post-professional curricula, as well as continuing education for rehabilitation professionals (Birch et al 2015).

Anecdotal evidence on emerging promising practice indicates that there is hope for people with FASD when their disability is diagnosed early and they receive "brain-based" support. All individuals with FASD have aptitudes that can be nurtured by informed care-givers and professionals. This support will need to continue to some extent for the life of the person with FASD and is best delivered by *circles of support* and good relationships started early in life.

Until the day comes when FASD no longer prevails, we must strive to minimize its impact on affected individuals, on their families and on society as a whole. Proper and continuing education of direct service workers will make a world of difference to those afflicted with FASD and to everyone around them.

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Strengthening the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) so that it can carry out its regulatory responsibilities in approving pesticides as well as protecting the environment.

Proposed by: CFUW Owen Sound and Area

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) strongly urge the Government of Canada to ensure that the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) of Health Canada, will use independent, third-party research when studying pesticide applications for its approval;

RESOLVED, That CFUW encourages the Government of Canada to re-write the wording of the regulations concerning pesticides so that the regulations are legally defensible and enforceable;

RESOLVED, That CFUW demands that the Government of Canada increase the budget of the PMRA so that it can fulfill its responsibilities by ensuring that all pesticides approved for use in Canada will be efficacious and protect the environment.

RELATED POLICIES:

Protecting the health of Canadians by reducing environmental toxins (2009),

Saving Our Pollinators and Our Environment: Moratorium on the Use of

Neonicotinoid Pesticides (2015)

BACKGROUND

CFUW has always been in the forefront in educating its members and the public about environmental issues as well as lobbying the Government of Canada to protect us from any danger. This Resolution is to inform the Government that we are troubled by pesticides. We demand that our environment be safe. At the present time we are not assured that our government is addressing the problems created by large, multi-national bio-chemical companies.(1) Can we rely on PMRA to protect us? Unfortunately no. The PMRA is crippled by poor regulations (2) and strangled by a meagre budget (3). In the 2014 Annual Report, the embattled agency met government budgetary demands by stating that they were hoping to collect more fees for services.(4) In other words, the income from companies applying for pesticide approval would help cover the operating costs of the department. The Agency uses research provided by the applicant. It does not use independent, third-party research (5). The PMRA also considers peer-reviewed (evaluated by similar agencies) scientific papers. (6) These activities do not result in an independently-researched review. The University of

Guelph, however, has the capacity to do independent research that would be of great value to the PMRA.

The use of systemic pesticides worldwide made headlines last year because of 'die off' of bees and their colonies.(6) Traces of systemic pesticides were found in the dead bees as a result of the ingestion of pollen from 'protected' crops.(7)

Monsanto (a U.S. company whose market is North America) and Syngenta (a Swiss bio-chemical company whose market is Europe) stated that the science blaming their products was faulty. Bad weather, varroa mite and poor forage were responsible, they said.(8) Syngenta, when faced with an European moratorium on the use of these systemic pesticides, sued the European Commission to overturn the ban. (9)

The province of Ontario passed legislation (2014) phasing out the use of these pesticides. The Grain Farmers of Ontario initiated court action, (10) requesting that the Ontario Superior Court of Justice issue a 'stay' on the 'unworkable' regulations. (11) The Court's decision, issued recently did not agree with the

Grain Farmers. The new regulations stand.

It is apparent that the PMRA does not have sufficient government support, nor the financial means to deal with or oppose big chemical companies. (12) No moratorium on the use of systemic pesticides has been issued by the Government of Canada. The matter is 'under re-evaluation'. (13)

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    Monsanto, an American bio-chemical company has 22,000 employees.

    Its main market is North America and is the largest seller of seed.

    Annual Report 2014

    Syngenta, a Swiss bio-chemical company has 29,340 employees

    Its main market is Europe although it sells in Africa and the Middle East.

2. http://www.pestcontrolcanada.com/Pesticide_regulations

     Section 5 of the Pest Control Products Act is the regulatory authority and under

    Section 18 registration must be denied if the use would lead to 'unacceptable

    risk'. Unacceptable risk is not defined further.

3. Annual Report 2013-2014 Pest Management Regulatory Agency

    Financial Profile page 12 PMRA received $25m for 2011-2012, total $ 44.5m

4. Annual Report, Executive Summary, 'PMRA developed a new cost recovery

    proposal to update our approach to collecting fees from registrants, to ensure

    more stable funding….'

5. http://www..pestcontrolcanada.com/Pesticide_regulations

    page 3 Section 1.5

6. New York Times article, July 2014 'Louder Alarm on pesticides harm'

7. 'Risks of large-scale use of systemic insecticides to ecosystem functioning and services', July 19, 2014, page 17 Sanchez-Bayo and Goka 2014 'residues of neonicotinoid insecticide in pollen pose high risk to honey-bees and bumblebees while in the field…'

8. New York Times article, July 2014, 'Pesticides are thought to be only one part of the widespread death of bees,..Other factors are believed to include varroa, viruses, fungi and poor nutrition.'

9. ibid

10. Globe and Mail article, June 30, 2014 Farmers Seek Stay on Neonic's restrictions.

11. Globe and Mail article, October 27, 2014 Farmers loose court case.

12. Monsanto, Annual Report 2014, Annual Sales $ 15.85b
    Syngenta Annual Report 2014, Annual Sales $ 15.1 b

13. Annual Report 2013-2014 Pest Management Regulatory Agency page 7, PMRA has collaborated with the U.S. EPA and the California Dept. of Pesticide Regulation on the re-evaluation of three neonicotinoid pesticides focussed on the risk to pollinators.'

RESOLUTION #4

Electoral Reform: Adding Proportionality to the Electoral System in Canada

Prepared by: CFUW Leaside – East York and CFUW Etobicoke   November, 2015

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the Government of Canada to reform the electoral system by adopting a proportional representation (PR) model to maximize the probability that each party's share of the seats in the legislature reflects the popular vote.

RESOLVED, That CFUW call upon the Government of Canada to proceed with a process for selecting and implementing a PR model that is transparent, adequately resourced, and involves, but is not limited to:
1. Consultation with electoral reform experts;
2. Public consultations and ongoing dialogue with citizens' groups;
3. Public education throughout the process, during implementation and post implementation;
4. A review of the new electoral system after elections take place under the new system.

BACKGROUND

This proposed resolution addresses reforming the electoral system, more specifically the voting system, based on a proportional representation (PR) model. This is supported by the first recommendation of the seminal Law Commission of Canada report, *Voting Counts*, based on a two-year study and public consultation, intended to inform both federal and provincial initiatives. Within PR models there is flexibility to make adaptations to fit the culture and characteristics of the nation, state or province. In this document, PR will refer to PR models in general. Refer to the Glossary in the Appendix for terms and explanations.

The Government of Canada elects legislative representatives through the Westminster model derived from Canada's colonial British past. This model is also referred to as First-Past-the-Post (FPTP). Among the main Westminster countries, only Canada continues to use FPTP for regional (provincial) and national elections (Milner, 2004). Even in the UK, PR has been introduced in Scotland and Wales. Most long-term democracies and most major nations of Europe and the Americas use PR systems (Fair Vote Canada, 2013). With the outdated FPTP system, legislatures fail to represent Canada's social diversity, vast geographic regions, and the voice of women. Recent attempts at reform in Canada have been unsuccessful, but there now seems to be a groundswell of interest. During his campaign and since, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has pledged to ensure that the 2015 election would be the last based on the FPTP system. This proposed resolution argues that CFUW should take action to support the government in changing the voting system to a system of proportional representation.

THE ISSUES

According to Pilon (2007) voting systems do matter. This backgrounder offers examples of quantifiable effects demonstrated by voting systems and other effects studied in depth.

DISTORTED ELECTION OUTCOMES AND WASTED VOTES

There are many examples of quantifiable outcomes from recent elections that illustrate wasted votes and distortions in representation readily available from sources such as Elections Canada and the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). Canada has ranked poorly, at 35th among 37 democracies, in terms of proportionality since 1945 (Law Commission of Canada, 2004).

Pilon (2007) posits that FPTP over-represents regional parties and larger parties with geographically concentrated support while under representing smaller parties and parties with more diffuse support. The Simon Fraser University Canadian Elections website has a detailed analysis of the 2011 federal election for which voter turnout was 61.1%. With 3.7% of the votes, the Green Party won 1 of 308 seats (0.3%). In Ontario, with an almost identical percentage of votes as the Liberal party, the NDP party gained twice as many seats, but in Saskatchewan, where they gained almost a third of the votes, not one seat was won. In 2011 the Conservative Party formed a majority government with 39.6% of the votes. In 2015, the Liberal Party formed government with 184 of the seats (54.4%) after winning just 39.5% of the popular vote. In a PR system, the Liberals would have won 134 seats, a minority government, and would have had to seek partners for a governing coalition with smaller parties such as the Greens, who would have won 12 seats. For federal elections from 1980 to 2004, with the exception of the 1984 election, the winning party received substantially less than 50% of the popular vote.

Wasted votes are votes that result in no representation. In the seven Canadian federal elections between 1980 and 2004, just over 49% of the votes were wasted. Fair Vote Canada (2013) compares Canada (50% wasted votes in 2004) to countries using PR systems: New Zealand (1% wasted, 2005), Germany (4% wasted, 2005) and Scotland (6% wasted, 2003). To overcome the problem of "vote splitting" within ridings, strategic voting was encouraged by unions such as UNIFOR, Canada's largest private sector union, for the 2014 Ontario provincial election, and by advocacy organizations, such as Strategic Voting 2015 and Lead Now, for the 2015 federal election. The promotion of strategic voting reflects the dysfunction of FPTP.

VOTER TURNOUT

There has been a dramatic decrease in voter turnout for Canadian federal elections. Turnout in 2008 and 2011 averaged 60% compared to rates as high as 80% in the 1958, 1962 and 1963 elections (Elections Canada). According to more current specific country data from IDEA's **Voter Turnout Database**, Canada ranks lower than Germany, Belgium, and Sweden, which all have PR systems, but has rates similar to the UK. In Canada, youth aged 18 to 24 have the lowest rates of all age categories: less than 40% in the 2011 federal election. A recent study based on a survey from across Canada (McGrane, 2015) found that youth are very much engaged in issues. Is the voting system a deterrent?

WOMEN AND MINORITIES

Strengthening the representation of women, including Aboriginal women and women from minority groups, is core to CFUW's mandate. Canada continues to fail to meet the critical mass of 30% women legislators identified by the United Nations (UN) to be the turning point when women begin to influence policy.

As of September 2015, Canada ranked 50th in the proportion of seats held by women as reported by 190 national parliaments (International Parliamentary Union, 2015). 30 seats (or 10%) were added to the House of Commons since 2011, and yet the percentage of women in the House only increased by 1% in 2015. At 26%, Canada is well below the UN's 30% cut-off. Within the top 10 countries, of the 190, 7 use a form of PR, and all have rates that exceed 41% of female representation. Compare these rates with other countries using FPTP: United States, 19.4%, Australia, 26.7 %.

In her study, Pippa Norris (2006) presents evidence that women are more successful in being nominated and elected under PR than under majoritarian systems.

Parties have historically favoured white male candidates as the best choice for the 'winner takes all' competition (Pilon, 2007). Under PR systems, women, Aboriginals, and minority groups have a greater chance of being included through party lists or multi-member districts. The experience of New Zealand is instructive: after its switch from FPTP to PR in 1996, the representation of women went from 21% to 29% and climbed further to 31.4% in 2014. Aboriginal representation has also increased substantially.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF VOTING SYSTEM REFORM IN CANADA

As early as 1874 there was a call for better minority representation federally, and there is a rich history of attempts at reform at the provincial level since World War 1. Quebec has been experiencing a long struggle for PR, and more recently, reform attempts culminated in referendums in both British Columbia (2005) and Ontario (2007). Both approached reform through a Citizens' Assembly (CA) which progressed through phases: learning, public consultation and finally deliberation. The BC recommendation of Single Transferable Vote (STV) was approved by 57% of the voters in a referendum, close to the 60% minimum required. In Ontario, the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) proposal was soundly defeated. LeDuc (2009) concludes the Ontario referendum was defeated because: the public information campaign was inadequate; the press was hostile; and the 60% threshold too high.

MOVING TO PR: QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

It is hoped that PR systems will deliver the desired qualities of a successful voting system (for a list, see Schwartz and Rettie, as cited in Law Commission of Canada, 2004). Arend Lijphart's findings (Fair Vote Canada, 2003), updated in 2012, provide answers to key concerns based on his long term study of government performance in 36 countries since 1945.

Government Stability: More minority governments are elected, and more coalition governments occur with proportional representation. However, although there are often shorter terms of power for minority governments there is no evidence that governing is less effective or that the economy is adversely impacted. Also FPTP may produce strong majority governments but they may also produce "weak oppositions". (Lijphart, 2012).

Party Proliferation: Studying the effective number of parties in different countries revealed that the average number of effective parties rose from 2.25 for non-PR governments to 4.50 for PR governments, still very manageable. The fear that too many parties will appear after PR is unfounded (Lijphart, 2012).The Netherlands, with an average of 4.65 parties, has one of the most proportional voting systems in the world.

Economic Impact: Although there is no evidence for the economic superiority of consensus democracies, neither can a claim of superiority be made for the majoritarian system. Consensus governments are less affected by abrupt policy changes, promote favourable effects on inflation and unemployment, and have a better record protecting the environment (Lijphart, 2012). The administrative cost of operating a PR system would not differ much from the cost of operating a plurality system with the same number of MPs. Verardi (2004) found as proportionality in government increases, income inequality decreases. With Canada ranking 12th highest out of 17 peer countries in the rate of income inequality (Conference Board of Canada), it is compelling to seek corrective measures like a PR voting system.

Citizen Satisfaction: Data from two international studies were statistically analyzed by Lijphart (2012) and demonstrate that citizen participation and satisfaction is significantly higher in PR countries, whether citizens voted for the winning party or not.

Lijphart (2012, p. 296) concludes "the overall performance of consensus democracies is clearly superior to that of the majoritarian democracies".

VOTING SYSTEM REFORM: THE PROCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Mainstream Canadian political parties lack a commitment to change from FPTP. Reform should be a joint responsibility that bridges the political arena with the public arena. In the cases of both BC and Ontario, the governments did not fully support the recommendations of the CAs they commissioned. According to the Law Commission (2004) a referendum can be a part of the process but is not essential. The Law Commission has already made a recommendation for MMP at the federal level with extensive input from the public and experts. Public education by both the government and the parties is essential, emphasizing 'big picture' outcomes, as well as the basics of the new PR system. Post reform, the Law Commission recommended a formal review of the new system after three elections, which should engage citizens in the process and track important indicators of change such as representation issues relating to women, minority groups, Aboriginal peoples and youth.

CONCLUSION

Studies of countries around the world show that governments with proportional representation (PR) constrain executive power to reasonable limits, increase consultation and government responsiveness, and give a voice to women and minorities. Experiences from other countries are convincing that reform can be made without negative impact. The reform process presents challenges, but in Canada informative groundwork and recommendations already exist. The time is now to create a voting system in Canada that is inclusive, representative, responsive and engaging for its citizens.

APPENDIX: GLOSSARY

Voting System. This is used to determine the balance of power individual parties have in the legislature. Components are: ballot design, districting, and the voting formula (Pilon, 2007).

PLURALITY MAJORITY SYSTEMS **(ALSO CALLED** MAJORITARIAN SYSTEMS**)**

First Past the Post (FPTP)

Also referred to as Single Member Plurality (SMP) and frequently referred to as 'plurality'.

The winner is the candidate with the most votes, regardless if this is a majority.

Alternative Vote (AV)

This is also referred to as the Preferential Ballot, the Transferable Ballot and the Ranked Ballot. Voters rank the candidates. If no candidates receive a majority, the voters' second preferences are used in determining a winner.

Note: Both FPTP and the Alternative Vote (AV) systems can be used as components within proportional representation (PR) models. Used alone, it has not been demonstrated that AV improves proportionality (Pilon, 2015; Fair Vote Canada, 2015).

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEMS (PR):

There are many models, but three are notable. These result in what some refer to as **Consensual** legislatures or **Consensus** democracies.

Mixed Member Proportional System (MMP):

MMP uses a double ballot. One ballot elects a local candidate using FPTP. The second ballot, the 'party list' ballot, is for selecting the voter's political party preference. Together these ensure that the distribution of legislative seats amongst the parties matches the distribution of the popular vote. This system was recommended by the Ontario Citizens' Assembly on Electoral

Reform, 2007, the Law Commission of Canada specifically for federal elections, and was recently introduced in New Zealand and Scotland.

List-PR System

Multi member districts are used. Each party offers a list of candidates. Voters vote for a party, which receives seats in the legislature in proportion to the share of the vote. The seats are filled from the party lists in order of their positions. This was popular in early 20th century reform and was adopted in Scandinavian countries.

Single Transferable Vote System (STV)

Alternative Vote (AV), or Ranked voting, is used in multi member districts. It allows for choice amongst parties and candidates. This was the system recommended by the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, 2005 and is currently used in Ireland.

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- Inter Parliamentary Union http://www.ipu.org

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, also known as GLOBAL GOALS

Proposed by: CFUW Standing Committee on Advocacy, CFUW Standing Committee on International Relations, CFUW Standing Committee on Education

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada to uphold its commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also known as Global Goals, thus helping to ensure that the established targets are reached by 2030, by, including but not limited to,

1. Immediately increasing its Official Development Assistance (ODA) to at least 0.7 % of Gross National Income (GNI) as adopted by a resolution of the UN General Assembly in 1970, and
2. Ensuring that any country receiving aid is involved in its planning and delivery
3. Establishing published plans of action, working in conjunction with provinces, municipalities, Aboriginal nations and civil society.

BACKGROUND

WHAT ARE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (A.K.A GLOBAL GOALS)?

They are the 17 goals with 169 associated targets (Transforming Our World, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015) that are the successor to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. These goals are:

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

* Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

On September 25, 2015, the 193 countries of the United Nations, including Canada, adopted *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.* While including a multi-page Preamble and Declaration (which in turn includes the Agenda, Means of Implementation, the Follow-up and Review), the *Agenda* culminates with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their targets.

With the success of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG Momentum, n.d.), considered the most successful anti-poverty movement in history, the United Nations tackled more. After the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was created in 2013 with representatives from 70 countries, including Canada. They conducted a consultation program which consisted of working group discussions, and "global conversations (11 thematic and 83 national consultations, door-to-door surveys, and an online survey**)** (Ford, 2015). CFUW presented both a letter to Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon (July 24, 2013) and a Brief to the Canadian Government concerning the Post-2015 Development Agenda (May 2015). (www.cfuw.org)

All of this culminated in this very ambitious 91-point international agreement with the 17 goals that integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development: environmental, economic and social. As the Preamble states:

> "This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity… We recognise that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development... We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet… we pledge that no one will be left behind… (The SDGs) seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what these did not achieve. They seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental…"(Transforming Our World, 2015)

HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT FROM THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS)?

The eight MDGs goals (United Nations Millennium Declaration, Sept.2000), with 18 targets, included education, human rights, gender equality, health, hunger, environment and global partnerships with the focus being on the world's poorest. The SDGs covers these goals, but with more robust targets, as well as energy, economic growth, industrialization, cities and human settlements, oceans, land and ecosystems. All related to sustainable development.

Another major difference is their impact on developed nations. Whereas the MDGs were aimed at the poorest, these are far more comprehensive, setting goals and targets that affect even the wealthiest nations.

WHY ARE THE SDGS IMPORTANT?

Sustainable development has been a major world concern since the Brundtland Commission report, *Our Common Future*, in 1987 first defined it as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987)

As well "the SDGs are very aspirational. Only if we have high, high aspirations can we ever begin to have a sense of inequality being tackled" (Kazim, Sept 15, 2015)

The goals and targets of the SDGs will provide the world with a roadmap to success, with this being tracked by civil society organizations such as ours as well as the United Nations through the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), and the signing nations themselves.

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT TO CANADA?

Unlike the MDGs, the SDGs impact the wealthy, developed nations such as Canada both nationally and internationally. (The Norman Paterson School, 2015)

Internationally, countries are expected to contribute 0.7% in Official Development Assistance (ODA) to developing countries and 0.15% to 0.2% of ODA/GNI (Gross National Income) to least developed countries. (Transforming Our World, 2015) Canada is currently contributing 0.24% ODA. (OECD, 2015)

Canada had championed MDG Goal 5 – Improve Maternal Health with the Muskoka Initiative (2010-2015) after the G8 meeting in 2010, but it did not extend its funding to support abortions. Will this Initiative now continue?

Within Canada itself, there are a number of areas of concern relating to the SDGs: poverty reduction, safe drinking water, women's rights, sustainable development, climate change, energy, environment, with many affecting Indigenous peoples.

Action within Canada becomes essential to address these issues. Child poverty in Canada is at 19%, with 1.3 million children living in poverty. (Campaign 2000, 2015) The federal riding of Churchill, Manitoba has the worst – over 65% of children there live in poverty, many of them Aboriginal. Canada's record on the environment is dismal. According to Conference Board of Canada study on the environment (online, n.d.), we ranked 15 out of 17 peer countries. The

report, *Progress on Women's Rights, Missing in Action: A Shadow Report on Canada's Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (Network of NGOs et al, 2014) noted that the pace towards gender equality has slowed over the past decade. Levels of violence, poverty, even women's employment has remained static. The priorities that were expressed in 1995 with the Beijing Platform for Action remain the same for the Beijing+20 report.

WHY ARE THE SDGS IMPORTANT TO CFUW?

CFUW advocacy work has centred for many years on areas of covered by the SDGs (Goal 4,5 and 13 among others). We have Clubs and Councils who are working on issues like the environment (water, carbon tax, climate change, fracking) mental health, and peace, among others.

These now have new goals and targets, with indicators for evaluation being discussed by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2016.

IF ADOPTED, HOW WILL CFUW USE THIS RESOLUTION?

Through its work at the National Office, CFUW contributed to the report, *Progress on Women's Rights*, *Missing in Action*. We have also written to both the government and the United Nations during their consultation concerning the SDGs. We have also prepared backgrounders, in particular on Maternal Health.

The goals, targets and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals become a rubric to both challenge governments and to keep them accountable, both nationally and internationally. At the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women 2015, the women presenting as part of panels in a number of the sessions said that, within their countries, they had the legislation and the policy, but were missing the implementation, the monitoring and the money. The SDGs set the necessary targets and with the indicators can help to pressure the governments to reach implementation.

Like other organizations, CFUW would continue to do its advocacy, expressing our concerns, both independently and jointly with partners, using this new tool.

IN CLOSING – FROM TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD

"A call for action to change our world.

Article 50. …We resolve to build a better future for all people, including the millions who have been denied the chance to lead decent, dignified and rewarding lives and to achieve their full human potential. We can be the first generation to succeed in ending poverty; just as we may be the last to have a chance of saving the planet. The world will be a better place in 2030 if we succeed in our objectives".

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