
**INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY**

MARCH 8, 2016

Call on all
to be
HEARD!



CALL ON ALL TO BE HEARD!

CALL ON ALL TO FIGHT SEXIST PREJUDICES

Whether in advertising or humor, on the Web or on television, the media are spreading stereotypes and prejudices which target and attack women. Relations between men and women are polluted by unequal gender representations which tend toward a sex hierarchy dominated by men. Those images are sexist. They interfere with achieving egalitarian relations. They are not respectful of the diversity of sexual identities.

CALL ON ALL FOR ECONOMIC EQUALITY

The Liberal provincial government's economic revival policies favour traditionally masculine sectors of occupations (such as construction and raw material extraction industries), while austerity policies are adopted at the cost of traditionally feminine sectors of occupations (such as public services, health, social services and education). This economic vision destroys the social safety net. Most of the time, it's again women who pay the cost of it: their salaries are still lower than those of men and they are more affected by poverty; women use public services more often and those are less and less accessible; the majority of single-parent households are headed by women so women are harder hit by the rise of the rates for daycare services; with a longer life expectancy, they are more poor at the time of retirement and suffer from a lack of accessibility to residential and long-term care centres (CHSLD). We must admit the obvious: austerity policies are sexist and they are becoming a serious threat to gender equality.

Women represent half of the world's population. However, the world's decision-makers still ignore the force they embody: an economic force, a political force and a force for the future. The Intersyndicale des femmes is issuing a call on all to achieve gender equality and invites all women to join us!

CALL ON ALL TO BE HEARD!

There is always someone to tell us that we have achieved gender equality. Yet, the reality is very different. Who among us has never heard: "Feminism? Outdated!" Some trash-talk radio stations, media influencers and masculinist (male chauvinist) groups would like to make us believe that we live in a matriarchy which is plaguing our society and endangering a masculine identity now in a crisis.

CALL ON ALL FOR A BETTER FAMILY-WORK-STUDIES BALANCE

Managing family responsibilities with work, studies or even both is a considerable feat. The government's repetitive affronts to the rates for daycare services weaken this balance. Most of the time, the biggest part of the domestic work and the children's education are assumed by women. This reality leads women to the point of exhaustion, forces them into unstable or part-time jobs or even restricts their career path. With a lower wage, they will be the ones who must stay at home if their ambitions are not equal to a salary high enough to pay the daycare fees. Most of the single-parent families are managed by women and their financial situation is deteriorating with the rate increases. As long as measures for family-work-studies are not routinely set up, de facto equality will remain out of reach.

CALL ON ALL FOR A WOMEN-SPECIFIC APPROACH IN HEALTHCARE

Access to healthcare services is increasingly difficult. Waiting lists are continually getting longer. The quality of care is subject to governance objectives. These failures in the system mainly affect women who use the services more, whether for reproductive health, because of their longer life expectancy or because they represent the major share of natural caregivers. A free and universal healthcare system, which takes into account the specific needs of women's health, is a cornerstone in achieving gender equality.

CALL ON ALL TO STOP VIOLENCE

Taboos around sexual assaults, domestic violence and sexual harassment too often condemn victims to silence. The lack of training and education concerning sexuality, at school or at work, is detrimental to the promotion of healthy and egalitarian relationships that are inclusive and respectful of diversity. Educate to switch the shame from the victim to the aggressor, to break the silence, to end the stigmatization of victims, this is what we need to do. We are all concerned by the systematic violence against women: this must change!

CALL ON ALL FOR EQUAL ACCESS TO JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Socialization and education bring men and women to choose different careers. Girls are usually oriented towards professions which correspond more to the roles that society requires of women, that is, "to care for". They are more concentrated in professions traditionally considered as feminine and do not have access to all occupations. However, typically masculine occupations are better paid most of the time than the typically feminine ones. Moreover, women's wages are lower than that of men on the labour market, even when they are more educated. The labour market should be equal and accessible to all, without any gender discrimination.

CALL ON ALL TO BREAK THE GLASS CEILINGS

The under-representation of women in the corridors of influence and power prevents legal equality becoming de facto equality. With only 37% of women in executive positions in Canada and less than 27% who sit in the Quebec National Assembly, the participation of women in places of power and influence is still anemic. Together, let's take our rightful place!

CALL ON ALL TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY!

¹ Status of Women Canada, *Women's Leadership and Democratic Participation*, [Online], 2015 [www.cfc-swc-gc.ca/initiatives/wlpd/index-eng.html] (Consulted on December 9, 2015)

² Conseil du statut de la femme (2015), *Portrait des Québécoises en 8 temps*.



INTERSYNDICALE DES FEMMES



Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux (APTS)
Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD)
Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ)
Fédération autonome de l'enseignement (FAE)
Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ)
Syndicat de la fonction publique et parapublique du Québec (SFPQ)
Syndicat de professionnelles et professionnels du gouvernement du Québec (SPGQ)



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