



December 6, 2016 |

Statements

## **Statement from Irene Lanzinger, President of the BC Federation of Labour to commemorate December 6**

**Vancouver**-The following is a statement from Irene Lanzinger, President of the BC Federation of Labour, to commemorate December 6:

Today is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, a day marked nationally to honour the fourteen women at Ecole Polytechnique who were massacred simply for choosing to train for professions in the trades.

2016 marks 27 years since this tragedy. But even after so many years there is still much to do to address violence against women, especially when it comes to educating the public on women in trades.

Violence doesn't start with a massacre. Violence starts with an assumption that women are lesser beings than men. It starts with open sexism in the workplaces like jokes in bad taste, and then evolves into open resentment of women in male dominated workplaces. If not addressed promptly, this resentment of women in workplaces can lead to escalated violence and assault.

We must be diligent in educating against this type of intolerance in workplaces.

Outside of the workplace, in the home and in the community, we need to consider the women and girls for whom violence is still a daily occurrence, and reflect on how such gender-based violence is perpetuated.

We must make sure that we never allow a tragedy like the Montreal Massacre to happen again and to do this, we need to ensure that women are not left out of the blueprints of community planning.

We must make sure that we are making school campuses safe for women to walk around in at night, without fear of being sexually assaulted.

We must ensure that when a woman is assaulted, resources exist to properly administer assault services, and that forensic evidence is properly stored so that abusers can be brought to justice.

When women and children flee domestic violence, our provincial government must do more to fund transition houses and shelters to give those at risk of violence a safe place to go.

We must ensure that women on job sites feel safe from all types of violence, psychosocial or physical

We cannot allow any more sisters to be stolen from us along the Highway of Tears or any other highway in BC. We must be sure to not leave our transgendered sisters out in the cold, as trans women are women who are statistically more likely to experience violence than non-trans women.

We must ensure that women with disabilities feel safe in our communities, as women with disabilities are four times more likely than women who do not have a visible disability to be assaulted.

We need to ensure that women feel safe as they travel on all highways in our province, as they walk around on their school campuses, as they walk in their neighborhoods, and as they sit in their homes.

We must continue the fight to make our homes, communities, workplaces safe places for all women.

No woman is free until all women are free, and we resolve today, on the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, to keep up the fight until all women are free.

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