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Statements

Statement on the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

Vancouver - The following is a statement from Irene Lanzinger, President of the BC Federation of Labour, on the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

“Today marks the 26th anniversary of the day a 25-year-old man walked into the École Polytechnique de Montréal armed with a rifle and went on a rampage that targeted only women.

At the end of this horrific event, 14 women were dead: Geneviève Bergeron, 21; Hélène Colgan, 23; Nathalie Croteau, 23; Barbara Daigneault, 22; Anne-Marie Edward, 21; Maud Haviernick, 29; Barbara Klueznick, 31; Maryse Laganière, 25; Maryse Leclair, 23; Anne-Marie Lemay, 22; Sonia Pelletier, 23; Michèle Richard, 21; Anne St-Arneault, 23; and Annie Turcotte, 21.

These women were killed for simply being women pursuing an education in the trades.

We mark this day each year to remember them – and to stand united against such terrible violence.

We mark this day each year because our work is far from over. Violence against women – in the home, the workplace, and the community – is still a reality, and continues to cause deep wounds in the lives of millions of women and girls in every corner of the globe.

In British Columbia, we still struggle for true recognition of the violence – physical, sexual and economic - women face every day.

The fact that we are still fighting for safe transportation along the Highway of Tears and for meaningful action on the thousands of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls stands as a testament to the government's inaction and failure on this issue.

The reality of violent crimes against women in our own backyard must not go unacknowledged and unchallenged.

On this Day of Remembrance and Action, we must remember the 14 women who were killed in 1989 and all women and girls who have been the targets of violence.

We must consider the women and girls for whom violence is still a daily occurrence.

And we must reflect on how such gender-based violence is perpetuated in our society.

This day should serve as an opportunity to re-commit to the challenges ahead – and for governments at every level to take the steps necessary to advance social and economic equality in our society."