

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

December 6, 2016

More than 25 years ago 14 women were murdered at Montreal's École Polytechnique. And yet, women and girls in Canada still face violence in their homes, schools, workplaces, and communities every single day. According to Statistics Canada, on average a woman is murdered every 6 days by her intimate partner. This is the extreme end of a spectrum that starts in casual sexism. The harassment and demeaning of women that we saw through the US Presidential campaign, that we see aimed at our own female politicians and that occurs in our workplaces must be denounced and addressed.

On December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, Unifor members will take part in events across the country and will recommit to taking action to end gender-based violence and sexism. These actions will include learning more about existing tools such as recent changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Act in Ontario and paid domestic violence leave in Manitoba. We will lobby our governments to expand these tools to all provinces and territories. We've put together materials to assist our activists in taking these issues forward, they can be found by visiting www.unifor.org/DVleave.

Unifor will continue its fight to keep and expand good jobs in our communities and ensure women have their share of these jobs. We know that economic security is a key determinant of safety for workers in violent relationships. We also know that having a union, a collective agreement with respectful workplace policies and joint investigation language, means a better working environment where we can all become our best selves.

In the community, we will continue to press for a National Action Plan on Violence against Women using the Blueprint developed by labour, women's and anti-violence organizations. And we will continue to support indigenous voices that are monitoring the progression of the national public inquiry into the deaths and disappearances of Indigenous women and girls.

December 6 is a day to remember the lives lost to violence, but it is also a time to take action on root causes of this violence. Together we can make a difference.