

NCWC RESOLUTIONS, UPDATE & EMERGING ISSUES 2016

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#1 CRUELTY FREE MEAT

Whereas #1 the current extreme cruelty to Canadian factory farmed animals at all stages: handling and living conditions, transportation to slaughter and slaughter itself, is unacceptable in a civilized society, and is a stain on the reputation of Canada; and

Resolved #1 that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that factory farmed animals have humane handling and living conditions, transportation and slaughter; and be it further

Resolved #2 that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:

- a) legislate humane handling and living conditions, transportation and slaughter for factory farmed animals with specific instructions about each of these stages
- b) strictly enforce the legislation.

Resolved #3 that NCWC urge all Councils of Women to work with their respective Governments to:

- a) legislate humane handling and living conditions, transportation and slaughter for factory farmed animals with specific instructions about each of these stages
- b) strictly enforce the legislation.

#2 NATIONAL DEMENTIA STRATEGY

- Whereas #1** an estimated 747,000 Canadians live with dementia and that number is expected to rise to 1.4 million by 2031; and
- Whereas #2** dementia is expected to cost the Canadian economy \$293 billion by 2040; and
- Whereas #3** provincially-designed policies and programs have led to gaps in how dementia is dealt with across the country; and
- Whereas #4** currently, the federal government is investing in dementia but concentrating on research only; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that Canada have a National Dementia Strategy; and be it further
- Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to develop a National Dementia Strategy in conjunction with the provinces and territories and the relevant organizations, to include:
- a) early diagnosis, treatment and prevention
 - b) research
 - c) a continuum of care to persons with dementia whether in the home, the community or in an institution
 - d) support for caregivers
 - e) education and training for the multidisciplinary teams working with persons with dementia.

#3 MICROPLASTIC FIBRES AND PELLETS IN BODIES OF WATER

- Whereas #1** microplastics are becoming abundant in water bodies due to wastewater from domestic washing machines in the washing of synthetic garments and pellets in personal care products; and
- Whereas #2** aquatic organisms ingest these microplastics and they make their way up the food chain; and
- Whereas #3** toxic organic compounds adsorb to the surface of microplastics and can be transferred to sediments and consumers; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy
- a) the elimination of microplastic fibres and pellets entering bodies of water
 - b) the reduction of microplastic fibres and pellets currently in bodies of water
- Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to support industry, universities and governments
- a) to investigate the presence and removal of microplastic fibre and pellet residues in bodies of water and
 - b) to seek solutions to eliminate the release of microplastic residues from known sources and reduce microplastic residues currently in bodies of water; and be it further
- Resolved #3** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to support communication campaigns to raise awareness about the effects of microplastic fibres and pellets in bodies of water.

#4 NON-IONIZING ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION - POSSIBLE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES TO HUMANS

- Whereas #1** While Canadians are familiar with the hazard posed by ionizing electromagnetic radiation such as x-rays, they are less knowledgeable about the possible hazard posed by non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation (EMR) such as that emanating from microwave ovens, cell phone towers, and Wi-Fi antennas; and
- Whereas #2** Canadians were unknowingly exposed to ionizing radiation of x-rays in the past and are now participating in the unprecedented cell phone use by adults and children; and
- Whereas #3** children's brains may be more susceptible to the effects (nerve stimulation and tissue heating) of the electromagnetic energy absorbed when the phone is held next to the head; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that Canadians be kept informed of the most recent research on the possible health consequences to humans posed by non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation including by wireless communication, especially on children; and be it further
- Resolved #2** that the NCWC urge the Government of Canada to keep Canadians informed of the most recent research on possible health consequences to humans posed by non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation including by wireless communication, especially on children, and regulate as required; and be it further
- Resolved #3** that NCWC urge its members, provincial, and local councils and federates to urge their respective governments to inform and educate the public of the possible health consequences to humans posed by non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation including by wireless communication, especially on children.

#5 PAID INTERNSHIPS

- Whereas #1** professional training programs are potentially prohibitive in tuition, books and tools, and in living expenses for the duration of the learning experience; and
- Whereas #2** numerous professions require field experience, which can last several months or even years for which the trainee pays tuition fees; and
- Whereas #3** the interns are tasked with increasingly challenging responsibilities which provide real service to the field office setting; and
- Whereas #4** labour legislation related to professional internships differs from province to province, creating a patchwork of different rules across the country; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that internship work experience contributing to the orientation of a new practitioner to a practice setting be remunerated at no less than the respective provincial or territorial minimum wage level established in the province and territories where the internship is taking place; and be it further
- Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to review and update the Canada Labour Code, to require the remuneration of internships related to professional certification and experience; and be it further
- Resolved #3** that provincial councils and federates urge their respective governments to include in the provincial or territorial labour legislation that interns practicing professional skills and competencies be remunerated at no less than the respective minimum wage level determined by the province or territory where the internship is taking place.

#6 THE RIGHT TO POTABLE WATER ON FIRST NATIONS RESERVES

- Whereas #1** according to the United Nations, “safe and clean drinking water” is a “human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights”; and
- Whereas #2** the *Constitution Act* mandates that the Federal Government provide “essential services of reasonable quality to all Canadians”; and
- Whereas #3** 100 percent of urban Canadian residents and 99 percent of rural Canadian residents have access to potable water, and the 1 percent of rural Canadian residents that lack access to potable water are predominantly Canadians living on reserves; and
- Whereas #4** there were 142 Drinking Water Advisories in effect in 96 First Nations communities across Canada, excluding British Columbia, as of August 31, 2015; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that although all Canadians have a basic human right to potable water, the Government of Canada has treaty obligations to First Nations communities and an urgent and specific responsibility to secure access to potable water to the residents of all First Nations reserves; and be it further
- Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to immediately allocate sufficient funding to provide access to potable water on all First Nations reserves within the next ten years; and be it further
- Resolved #3** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada in consultation with the communities, immediately develop five-year and ten-year plans of action to ensure that the allocated funds are utilized in an accountable manner to create sustainable solutions for accessible potable water including education and maintenance of systems by people in the communities.

#7 UPDATED AND ADEQUATELY-FUNDED NATIONAL HIV/AIDS STRATEGY

Whereas #1 more than 30 years after the first case was diagnosed, HIV/AIDS is still with us and despite progress in both prevention and treatment, it remains a serious cause of morbidity, mortality and economic and social disruption; and

Whereas #2 currently, there is neither a cure for AIDS nor a vaccine to prevent new infections; and

Whereas #3 a 2005 Canada-wide consultation with all sectors of the HIV/AIDS community involved in AIDS prevention, treatment and community support, developed a national 'Leading Together' strategy, which was updated in 2013; and

Whereas #4 the Government of Canada's HIV/AIDS strategy is now more than a decade old, is not informed by the most recent scientific breakthroughs, and has never been adequately funded; therefore be it

Resolved #1 that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy support for an updated and adequately funded Federal strategy on HIV/AIDS; and be it further

Resolved #2 that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:

- a) update its HIV/AIDS strategy, building on the 2013 Leading Together Strategy, using the latest scientific research
- b) provide adequate funding for front-line services, education and programs that offer HIV/AIDS prevention and provide care, treatment and support to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families and communities.

NCWC UPDATE

UPDATE #1 CESSATION OF THE USE OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IN FEDERAL PENITENTIARIES

- Whereas #1** in 2011 the National Council of Women of Canada adopted as policy that Canada's penal system be based on:
- a) a rehabilitation model including probation, sentencing treatment and parole of prisoners which takes into account not only community safety but also the rehabilitation of offenders;
 - b) appropriate facilities for mentally ill offenders, both male and female;
 - c) alternative approaches to sentencing which not only protect the community but also work towards the rehabilitation and more positive outcomes for offenders; and
 - d) work with other levels of government to ensure that poverty reduction strategies as well as community programs for the support of at-risk families and youth are in place.
- Whereas #2** international treaty bodies and human rights experts consider solitary confinement , which dehumanizes a person, to be a form of torture and many jurisdictions, including Ontario, are moving away from its use; and
- Whereas #3** solitary confinement of inmates over undue lengths of time is being used as a disciplinary tool in federal penitentiaries, and the steadily increasing numbers of prisoners due to changes in federal laws has caused overcrowding of these facilities, which has exacerbated the situation; and
- Whereas #4** persons with mental health challenges are particularly at risk of self harm and suicide; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as further policy that solitary confinement of inmates not be used as a disciplinary tool in federal penitentiaries and that there be sufficient, independent, secure facilities for persons with mental health issues; and be it further
- Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to cease using solitary confinement as a disciplinary method in federal penitentiaries and ensure sufficient, independent, secure facilities for persons with mental health issues.

EMERGING ISSUE RESOLUTIONS

El#1 Support for a Basic Income Guarantee

- Whereas #1** income insecurity and poverty in Canada continue to grow as, social assistance rates across Canada fall far short of income adequacy, precarious employment rises steadily, with automation and artificial intelligence playing an increased role, and working full time no longer provides assurance of living above the poverty line; and
- Whereas #2** investments in a basic income guarantee program have proven to help alleviate poverty, support people in their efforts to participate in the economy, decrease societal costs, improve educational outcomes and improve the quality of life and sense of dignity, for individuals, families and children; and
- Whereas #3** existing income supplement programs such as the Old Age Security and Canada Child Benefit have proven to help reduce poverty significantly; and
- Whereas #4** the federal and some provincial governments are currently very interested in the use and outcomes of basic income guarantee programs, and Ontario's has committed to undertake a basic income pilot project; therefore be it
- Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada adopt as policy support for a national basic income guarantee program; and be it further
- Resolved #2** that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to work with the provinces and territories to consider, investigate and develop a national basic income guarantee program.

EI#2 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Whereas #1 the agenda for the Millennium Development Goals expired on Dec 31, 2015, and more work still needs to be done to achieve these; and

Whereas # 2 much progress was made on these goals, but, for example, while the goal to eliminate poverty saw improvements worldwide, some people were left behind; and

Whereas #3 members of the United Nations agreed in September 2015 to adopt a new set of goals for 2030, called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or the Global Goals, a shared agenda to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and protect the planet; and

Whereas #4 it was appreciated by Millennium Goal experts that future improvements need to be sustainable, and that involving more women in the consultation, planning and decision-making stages, as well as implementation and monitoring, would lead to greater success; be it resolved

Resolved #1 that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy support for the education and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Goals; and be it further

Resolved #2 that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to develop national plans for the education and implementation of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with some urgency; and be it further

Resolved #3 that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to include women at all stages of planning, decision-making, education, implementation and monitoring of Canada's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.