

October 2015

## **TO ALL CUPE CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS**

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

### **DECEMBER 6 – NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

On December 6, we mark the anniversary of the 1989 École Polytechnique massacre, where 14 women were singled out because of their gender and murdered. One of those women, Maryse Laganière, was a CUPE member who worked at the school.

Gender-based discrimination and violence remain widespread in our workplaces and communities, as the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), Canadian Women's Foundation, Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women and others have documented.

CUPE is challenging violence against women at the bargaining table, on the political front and in our communities.

#### **Domestic violence and work**

Of the 8,429 workers surveyed last year by the CLC and Western University, one-third (33.6 per cent) said they had experienced domestic violence and it affected them at work. CUPE members participated in the survey; members face domestic violence, and it follows them to work, with serious consequences.

CUPE recently published a bargaining guide that explains domestic violence at work and how the union can negotiate protections, with language examples and a checklist. We've spoken on the issue at provincial division conferences. We're working with the CLC and sister unions to press for stronger laws on workplace violence, including domestic violence. And earlier this year, we helped the Canadian Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses launch an online resource for women and children escaping domestic violence.

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Actions you can take:

- Vote on October 19 for the party that promises concrete action on domestic violence. The NDP commits to restore funding to women's shelters, anchored in their action plan to end violence against women and girls.
- Order the bargaining guide on our website at [cupe.ca](http://cupe.ca).
- Survey members on workplace violence, including domestic violence.
- Negotiate language on domestic violence.
- Invite a local shelter or crisis line worker to provide training.
- Support local community groups fighting violence against women.

### Missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls

Aboriginal women and girls continue to face extreme levels of violence. Aboriginal organizations and allies across Canada and internationally have called for a national public inquiry and action plan.

Actions you can take:

- Vote on October 19 for Aboriginal women's rights; the NDP commits to launch an inquiry on missing and murdered indigenous women within the first 100 days in office.
- Attend the Walking with Our Sisters memorial installation when it reaches your community. Find out more at [walkingwithoursisters.ca](http://walkingwithoursisters.ca).
- Organize or join an event for the February 14 national day of action for murdered and missing indigenous women.
- Support Aboriginal women's organizations.

Many CUPE members and staff across the country work daily to end gender-based violence and support workers and families affected. As December 6 approaches, CUPE applauds your activism, and we re-dedicate ourselves to ending violence against women.

In solidarity,



PAUL MOIST  
National President



CHARLES FLEURY  
National Secretary-Treasurer