

Statement from the National Council of Women of Canada on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict

Today, on the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, the National Council of Women of Canada stands in solidarity with survivors and honours the courage and resilience of those impacted by this grave violation of human rights. Sexual violence in conflict is a deliberate and devastating tactic used to terrorize, control, and destroy individuals, families, and communities.

We recognize that women and girls are disproportionately affected by this violence, making up the majority of victims in conflict zones. The trauma inflicted upon them is far-reaching, with consequences that extend across generations. Too often, survivors face overwhelming barriers, including fear, stigma, and a lack of access to justice, support, and essential services. Perpetrators frequently operate with impunity, while critical services such as medical care, psychosocial support, and legal assistance remain insufficiently funded and unavailable in many regions.

As advocates for the rights and safety of women, families, and communities, we reaffirm our commitment to ending impunity for conflict-related sexual violence. We call for strengthened measures to prevent such acts, protect those at risk, and ensure survivor-centered approaches to justice and healing. Furthermore, the full implementation of international commitments to gender equality and women's rights is essential to creating lasting change.

Let us honour the legacy of those who have fought for justice, dignity, and equality, and let us renew our collective resolve to create a world where no one suffers the horrors of sexual violence in conflict. Together, we can work to ensure that survivors' voices are heard, perpetrators are held accountable, and future generations live free from this scourge.

We urge governments, organizations, and individuals to unite in action and investment to uphold the rights, safety, and dignity of all, paying particular attention to the heightened vulnerability of women and girls in conflict settings.

1. <https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-sexual-violence-in-conflict-day>
2. <https://www.unfpa.org/events/international-day-elimination-sexual-violence-conflict>
3. <https://unis.unvienna.org/unis/en/pressrels/2025/unissgsm1503.html>
4. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/international-day-for-the-elimination-of-sexual-violence-in-conflict-joint-statement-to-the-osce>
5. <https://yemen.un.org/en/296264-secretary-general-message-international-day-elimination-sexual-violence-conflict-2025>
6. <https://www.euam-ukraine.eu/news/international-day-for-the-elimination-of-sexual-violence-in-conflict/>
7. <https://khrhg.org/2025/06/statement-2025-international-day-elimination-sexual-violence-conflict>
8. <https://www.etvbharat.com/en/!international/10th-anniversary-of-the-international-day-for-the-elimination-of-sexual-violence-in-conflict-enn25061904973>
9. <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/statement-un-resident-and-humanitarian-coordinator-sudan-ai-kristine-hambrouck-international-day-elimination-sexual-violence-conflict>