



Tuesday September 30th, 2026

The Right Honourable Mark Carney
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
Ottawa, Ontario

Re: Urgent Request to Appoint a New Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

We, the National Council of Women of Canada, write with an urgent recommendation concerning Canada's commitment to gender equality, peace and security: that the Government of Canada should appoint a new Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security (WPS). Too much time has passed without an announcement about a successor to former Ambassador Jackie O'Neill.

Canada has long been recognized for its commitment to human rights, multilateralism and gender equality. Its Feminist International Assistance Policy reflects an ambition to build a more peaceful, inclusive and prosperous world. Integral to that vision is the WPS agenda, established through UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions. It recognizes both the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and girls and their indispensable role in preventing conflict, building peace and supporting recovery.

Canada has made commendable strides in integrating WPS principles into its foreign policy and defence initiatives. Jackie O'Neill served as Ambassador with grace and distinction. Appointing a successor would sustain that work and provide a high-level, visible voice to champion the WPS agenda at home and internationally. The Ambassador would also serve as a focal point for advocacy, coordination and implementation across government and with international partners.

This role is more pressing than ever. As conflicts and humanitarian crises deepen, the rights of women and girls are increasingly under threat. Women are often at the forefront of resilience and peacebuilding, yet their voices remain marginalized. A dedicated Ambassador could help ensure that their perspectives are central to peace and security decisions.

The Ambassador's responsibilities would include:

- **Elevating Canada's voice** in international forums, including the United Nations, NATO and the G7, and advocating for women's meaningful participation in peace negotiations and post-conflict governance.
- **Strengthening policy coherence** across Global Affairs Canada, the Department of National Defence, Public Safety Canada and other departments with WPS responsibilities.
- **Engaging civil society** in Canada and internationally so that policy is informed by expertise and lived experience.
- **Driving implementation and accountability** by identifying gaps, reporting on progress and recommending concrete action.
- **Sharing best practices** with international partners and **responding to emerging crises** with gender-informed analysis and advocacy.

A new Ambassador would reaffirm that Canada regards gender equality as essential to sustainable peace and security. More importantly, the appointment would help turn that commitment into coordinated action and ensure that women are meaningfully included in decisions that affect their lives.

We urge the Government of Canada to act swiftly to reestablish this vital role. NCWC stands ready to offer its support and expertise in advancing a more peaceful and equitable world for all.

Thank you for considering this recommendation. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further and to contribute NCWC's perspective to Canada's continued work on the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Yours sincerely,

Penny Rankin

President

National Council of Women of Canada

cc.

The Honourable Anita Anand, Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Honourable Rechie Valdez Minister of Women and Gender Equality (WAGE), The Honourable David McGuinty Minister of National Defence, The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Chair, House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development



Established in 1893 and Incorporated by an Act of Parliament in 1914 our mission is directed to empowering all women to work together towards improving the quality of life for women, families, and society through a forum of member organizations and individuals.

