



To: Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

CC:
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Melanie Joly
Minister of WAGE, Marci Ien

YWCA Ontario is a coalition of YWCAs across the province from Niagara Region to Sudbury. Collectively, we serve more than 45,000 women, girls and gender diverse individuals each year. As feminist, multiservice providers with deep roots in our respective communities, we work together to defend the rights of those who experience systemic marginalization and respond to violence and trauma.

Women, children and gender-diverse people are disproportionately affected by war and its aggression and escalation. This has been and continues to be particularly true in Gaza and Israel, increasingly so over the last six weeks. Through six days of temporary truce, we have learned of families reuniting with loved ones safely and aid reaching those who desperately need it. We urge those in power to act to prevent further horrors, brutal assaults on civilians and disregard for human rights that cannot be undone.

We are joining our colleagues in feminist, gender justice and human rights organizations across Canada to urge the Federal Government to act swiftly toward an unconditional, sustainable ceasefire and to focus on justice, liberation and lasting peace.

Sincerely,

YWCA Ontario Coalition

See below for the original letter:



Action Canada
for Sexual Health & Rights

November 17, 2023

Subject: Feminist Organizations Joint Appeal for Immediate Ceasefire in Gaza

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

We, the undersigned, a **coalition of feminist, gender justice, and human rights organizations**, come together to add our collective voice, echoing the concerns of Canadians and advocates worldwide. The escalating death toll in the Palestine and Israel region demands immediate attention and action. **We implore the Canadian Government to wield its influence forcefully, demanding an immediate ceasefire in the occupied Gaza Strip and Israel. We call on our government to join the international effort to monitor the ceasefire.** The time for decisive action is now. Peace, human rights, and gender equality are imperatives that must inform the Canadian response to these current events, consistent with Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy. The path of militarization leads to heightened violence, especially gender-based violence, and obstructs access to critical resources, including healthcare. Women, children, and LGBTQ+ people are disproportionately vulnerable in times of conflict. As unwavering advocates for human rights and gender equality across diverse communities, we call on Canada to prioritize the well-being of affected communities. It's time to champion peace, equality, and the safeguarding of human rights.

The call for "pauses" does not adequately address the urgent need to save lives and alleviate the immediate and critical humanitarian crisis unfolding in the region.

Reports of civilian casualties, widespread trauma and injuries, individuals left without adequate medical care, and the dire conditions faced by vulnerable populations, including infants in incubators, children, pregnant women, those about to give birth or immediately post-partum, LGBTQ+ people and disabled people, compel us to appeal for immediate and decisive action to bring about a ceasefire. As the world witnesses the widespread suffering, injuries, and loss of lives among civilians, including thousands of children, it is our responsibility as feminist, gender justice, and human rights organizations to call on you to take a clear and decisive stance.



Action Canada
for Sexual Health & Rights

Furthermore, we request that Canada actively makes every possible effort to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to the affected areas in Gaza and support the safe return of hostages to their families. The urgency of the situation demands swift and decisive action to ensure that medical facilities receive the necessary support to treat the injured and that essential supplies such as food, water, fuel, medical supplies, reach those in need.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. As advocates committed to the principles of gender equality and to the protection of human rights, we earnestly implore our government, which proudly identifies itself as feminist, to align its actions with these professed values. We trust that you will consider this joint appeal with the gravity it deserves.

Sincerely,

- Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights
- AGIR Outaouais
- AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia
- Amnesty International Canada English Speaking Section
- Avalon Sexual Assault Centre
- Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic
- Birth Mark
- Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity
- Canadian Council of Muslim Women
- Canadian Women's Foundation
- Cape Breton Centre for Sexual Health
- Child Care Now (Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada)
- Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice
- DisAbled Women's Network of Canada||Réseau d'action des femmes handicapées du Canada
- Ending Violence Association of Canada
- Fédération du Québec pour le planning des naissances
- FemDev Consulting
- Grounded Doula Services
- Halifax Sexual Health Centre
- Klinik Community Health
- Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak
- National Right to Housing Network



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- New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity
- Niagara Reproductive Justice
- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
- Oxfam Canada
- Planned Parenthood NL Sexual Health Centre
- Planned Parenthood Regina
- Planned Parenthood Toronto
- Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan
- Sexual Health Nova Scotia
- South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
- The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS)
- The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women/ L'Institut canadien de recherches sur les femmes (CRIA-W-ICREF)
- The Obstetric Justice Project
- Women's Centre for Social Justice (WomenatthecentrE)
- Women's Shelters Canada
- YWCA Halifax

CC: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mélanie Joly

Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, Marci Ien