

disability, family or socio-economic status, or because they are indigenous women.

Madam President, Canada has worked to ensure that the Platform for Action is based on an understanding that social and economic policies go hand in hand. This Platform must respond to the face of poverty that is increasingly female - a dire reflection of persistent economic inequality.

Worldwide, women's autonomy and control over economic resources are essential to their own and their families' survival - it is especially critical for their children.

Worldwide, we need protection of women's rights as workers and the promotion of equality in education, training, employment and other forms of work. We need policies that enable women to earn their livelihoods on an equal basis with men and to fulfil their family responsibilities.

We need better understanding of the relationship between paid work and the unpaid work that sustains our families, our institutions, our societies and economies.

We need to pay more attention to the impact of socio-economic factors on women's health. These include economic policies and structural adjustments.

Canada is committed to the agreements reached on women's reproductive health and rights at the International Conference on Population and Development. We will work to ensure that they are reaffirmed in the Platform for Action. Nothing less.

Women in Canada and around the world are deeply concerned about peace and security issues. The Platform must set out measures to enhance women's important role in peace and conflict resolution. War is not just a peace and security issue. It is a health issue.

Women and children often suffer disproportionately in situations of armed conflict. We must recognize and address this fact. Canada has introduced wording to the Platform related to rape as a war crime and a crime against humanity.

In our own country, we have adopted guidelines for establishing gender-based persecution as eligible grounds for women seeking refugee status. We have worked to reach agreement in the Platform on the recognition of sexual violence and other gender-related persecution as grounds for consideration for refugee status.