

As the women of Canada know, there is some distance between the principle of equality, widely accepted, and its reality, still far short of achievement. It is the duty of Parliament and government to help ensure that Canadian society travels that distance as quickly as possible

...Speech from the Throne
November 5, 1984

As a national priority, we must continue to remove the barriers that have prevented women from participating freely and equitably in the mainstream of Canadian society.

...Speech from the Throne
October 1, 1986

PART I INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL EQUALITY COMMITMENTS

For nearly 40 years, successive federal governments have made a commitment -- both internationally and nationally -- to advancing the equality of women.

In 1948 Canada signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. This declaration states that every person is entitled to rights and freedoms without distinction on any basis and is entitled to protection against discrimination, to free choice of employment and to equal protection of the law.

Canada's international commitment to the principle of equality was reaffirmed in 1981 when our nation ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The Convention committed its signatories to take measures in the political, social, economic and cultural fields to ensure the full development and advancement of women.

In 1985 Canada was a key participant at the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women in Nairobi, Kenya and played a major role in developing the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies (FLS) for the Advancement of Women. The FLS "provides a blueprint for action on a range of issues affecting every aspect of women's lives"⁽¹⁾ and our government is committed to its implementation.