



news release

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MINISTERS SAY WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

To mark International Women's Day, External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall, the Minister for External Relations and International Development, Monique Vézina, and the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, Mary Collins, issued the following statement:

On March 8, Canadians join the rest of the world in celebrating International Women's Day. This is an occasion to reflect on the progress made to advance women's equality and an opportunity to assess the challenges facing women in Canada and around the world.

The Government's theme for this year is "Women's Rights are Human Rights," which ties in with the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights taking place in Vienna, Austria in June 1993.

Canada has been, and continues to be, a strong and consistent supporter of women's human rights in many international forums including the United Nations, the Commonwealth, the Organization of American States, La Francophonie and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Canada has actively participated in the UN Commission on the Status of Women and was instrumental in drafting a UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Furthermore, Canada co-sponsored the UN Commission on Human Rights resolution on sexual violence against women in the former Yugoslavia, which was adopted in late February 1993, and has provided special funding to help women and children in Bosnia-Herzegovina who are victims of sexual assault.

Since 1984, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has had a Women in Development Policy to promote the full participation of women in all its development programs. This policy was revised in 1992 to stress the role of women as equal partners in the sustainable development of their societies. Toward this end, CIDA has funded a number of