

UN standard-setting continues to evolve, with the recognition that certain groups have traditionally been marginalized and may be more susceptible to violation of their rights. For example, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, initiated by Canada, was adopted by the General Assembly in 1993. Canada is also active in developing a UN draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people.

The Beijing Declaration and the Beijing Platform for Action were adopted by consensus at the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in September 1995. They represent important gains in women's rights and equality issues. Canada was instrumental in achieving agreement in a number of key areas, including the universality of women's rights, violence against women, and rape as a war crime. Canada will urge strong political commitment to progress on women's equality when the Beijing Conference is followed-up at the UN General Assembly and the UN Commission on the Status of Women.