



Abortion Rights  
Coalition of Canada

Coalition pour le droit à  
l'avortement au Canada

**For immediate release**

**Canadian organizations working in sexual and reproductive health  
denounce the inconsistency of Canada's Conservative government  
regarding women's health**

**Montreal, October 9, 2013** – Following the statements made last week by the Minister of Foreign Affairs John Baird and International Development Minister Christian Paradis, Canadian groups working on sexual and reproductive health question the genuine commitment of the Conservative government's Women's Health foreign policies.

In late September, Stephen Harper and his government tried to reaffirm their international leadership in women's health by pointing to the funds invested by Canada in the health of mothers, newborns and children, and taking a position against forced marriages of girls and rape as a weapon of war.

Yet this same government refuses to support or fund access to abortion in developing countries, even in cases of rape and forced marriage. It is well documented that girls are more likely to die in childbirth than adult women, that 47,000 women die each year as a result of unsafe abortion, and millions more are injured and mutilated by the poor conditions associated with the intervention.

“How can we take seriously the government’s concern for the health of women internationally, while it refuses to fund a basic service that is integral to the right to health, as recognized by the Special Rapporteur of the UN? ”asks Joyce Arthur, Executive Director of the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada. “We need consistent policies around women's health.”

Women and girls have special needs in reproductive and sexual health, and access to legal and safe abortion is as important as access to quality contraception and safe childbirth services.

"In Canada, we have fought for all women to have access to sexual and reproductive health services tailored to their needs, and will continue to do so. Likewise, we stand in solidarity with women around the world. We urge this government to put aside political and ideological posturing and take concrete steps to truly become an international leader in the field of women's health," says Sophie Cordes, spokesperson for the Quebec Federation for Planned Parenthood.

**Signed:**

- Sophie Cordes, Quebec Federation for Planned Parenthood (FQPN)  
(514-866-3721, poste 1803)
- Joyce Arthur, Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada (ARCC-CDAC)  
(604-351-0867)

**Joined by:**

- Action Canada for Population and Development (ACPD) /  
Action Canada pour la population et le développement
- AGIR Outaouais
- À La Source Sept-Îles
- Alliance femmes handicapées du Québec
- BC Federation of Labour
- Birth Control and Sexual Health Centre
- Brampton Women's Clinic
- Canadian Federation of Medical Students
- Catholics for Choice – Canada
- Central Toronto Community Health Centres
- Centre des femmes de Montréal / Women's Centre of Montreal
- Centre des femmes de Verdun
- Centre Info-Femmes
- Coalition des familles homoparentales/ LGBT Family Coalition
- Collectif pour le Libre Choix de Sherbrooke
- ConcertAction Femmes Estrie
- Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN)
- Fédération canadienne des femmes diplômées des universités /  
Canadian Federation of University Women
- Grossesse secours
- Humanists, Atheists, and Agnostics of Manitoba
- Institute for International Women's Rights – Manitoba
- Kamloops Centre for Rational Thought Society
- La Clinique des femmes de l'Outaouais
- Le Centre de santé des femmes de Montréal
- La Collective des femmes de Nicolet et région

- L'R des centres de femmes du Québec
- Medical Students for Choice, Northern Ontario School of Medicine chapter
- Medical Students for Choice, University of Toronto chapter
- Medical Students for Choice, University of Western Ontario chapter
- Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics / Coalition ontarienne pour les cliniques d'avortement
- OPSEU Provincial Women's Committee
- PEI Abortion Rights Network
- Regroupement de femmes de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- Regroupement québécois des centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel, RQCALACS
- Réseau québécois d'action pour la santé des femmes
- Saskatchewan Pro-Choice Network
- Socialist Party of Ontario / Parti Socialiste de l'Ontario
- SOS Grossesse
- Table de concertation des groupes de femmes de la Gaspésie et des Îles-de-la-Madeleine
- Table de concertation de Laval en condition féminine
- Unifor Local 27 (London)
- Voices for Choice – NL