



Achieving the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action

Background

The **Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)** was established to document the history and impacts of the “Canadian Indian residential school system” on Indigenous students and their families. The TRC’s mandate was to guide and inspire First Nations, Inuit, and Métis residential school survivors and other Canadians in a process of truth and healing leading toward reconciliation and renewed relationships based on restorative justice, mutual understanding and respect. CFUW (2017) passed a resolution specific to reconciliation largely encouraging club members to learn more and to engage in restoring friendly relationships with Indigenous peoples. CFUW advocates that the full implementation of the **TRC’s ninety-four Calls to Action** could shine a light on the potential benefits for the lives of Indigenous women and girls in addressing institutional, systemic, and multiple intersecting forms of racism and sexism.

Quick Facts

- Residential schools operated for 150 years, the last one closing in 1996
- Over 150,000 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children were forced to attend the schools administered by the Canadian government and churches
- The TRC was published in 2015 with 94 Calls to Action
 - 10 calls are complete, 22 are in progress with projects underway, 38 have proposed projects, 26 are not started
- Using a gender lens in the Calls to Action will support the rights and experiences of Indigenous women and girls, in particular:
 - **Call to Action #41** on the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls; **Calls to Action #1-5** on child welfare; **Calls to Action #23 & #24** on culturally competent health care; **Call to Action #30** on disproportionate incarceration
- Indigenous children (0-14) account for approx. 7.7% of the country’s population, but represent 52.2% of children in foster care

Relevant Legislation & Canada’s Obligations

- **1876 The Indian Act:** A federal law that regulates “Indian” status and controls the day-to-day lives of Indigenous communities still in effect today. Sought to terminate the cultural, social, economic, and political distinctiveness of Indigenous Peoples through forcible assimilation. **Education Act 1920 s. 10(1):** Mandated that Indigenous children must attend a Residential School from the ages seven to fifteen
- **2015 The Truth and Reconciliation Commission:** The multi-volume final report concluded that the school system amounted to “cultural genocide”
- **2016 The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP):** Adopted by Canada. Entry into force by the end of 2020. Establishes a universal framework for the survival, dignity and well-being of Indigenous peoples and elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms.
- **2019 The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls:** The National Action Plan from the findings of the National Inquiry into MMIWG has been delayed due to the global COVID-19 pandemic

Achieving the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action – 2020

Adopted at the 2020 AGM

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada and the provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments, as well as the professional bodies, religious denominations and other entities named in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, to continue to work toward implementing and monitoring the implementation of the ninety-four actions recommended in the document and to do so urgently with reasonable but ambitious timelines for completion.

331 Cooper St.
Suite 502
Ottawa, ON K2P 0G5
Tel. 1-613-234-8252
www.cfuw.org



Achieving the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action

Take Action

CFUW clubs should review the Calls to Action and choose one or two that would be of interest to their club.

- CFUW clubs should build their group's knowledge of the historical context of the chosen Calls to Action by examining:
 - challenges to settler-Indigenous relations
 - the historical agreements and policies that existed before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- Take the University of Alberta online course through Coursera:
<https://www.coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada>
- CFUW clubs and members should examine the current state of affairs in Canada specific to racism, demographic data about poverty, health and domestic violence among Indigenous populations (in particular women and children), and the legal aid/penal system.
- CFUW clubs should locate other groups in your community who are interested in Indigenous justice and find out what they are doing.
- CFUW clubs should determine, through listening to Indigenous people and potential allies in your community, if support from CFUW would be helpful and in what way.

Achieving the Truth and
Reconciliation Commission
Calls to Action – 2020

Adopted at the 2020 AGM

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada and the provincial, territorial, municipal and Indigenous governments, as well as the professional bodies, religious denominations and other entities named in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, to continue to work toward implementing and monitoring the implementation of the ninety-four actions recommended in the document and to do so urgently with reasonable but ambitious timelines for completion.

331 Cooper St.
Suite 502
Ottawa, ON K2P 0G5
Tel. 1-613-234-8252
www.cfuw.org