

**2011:01EI THE NEED FOR ALL CANADIANS TO HAVE ACCESS TO SUFFICIENT RESOURCES
TO COVER THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE**

Whereas 1 the UN Declaration of Human Rights declares that “everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and one’s family, including food, clothing, housing, necessary social services, and to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his/her control” with “motherhood and childhood entitled to special care and assistance”, and

Whereas 2 the National Council of Welfare publication, *Welfare Incomes 2009* found that despite the fact that all welfare incomes increased in 2008, this increase had very little effect as welfare incomes had already lost so much ground due to inflation of 45% between 1990 and 2009, welfare incomes are still far away from providing the necessities of life, as are the incomes of people working at minimum and other low wages and the Canadian Community Health Survey shows that 9.2% of the population of Canada or more than 1.1 million people live with food insecurity; and

Whereas 3 research by the Canadian Centre for Public Policy Alternatives shows that there is a growing gap between upper income Canadians whose incomes have grown very quickly, and both middle income families, whose incomes have stagnated, and lower income Canadians whose incomes have lost ground over recent years, this putting low income earners and social assistance recipients at risk of food and shelter insecurity; and

Whereas 4 the World Health Organization, responding to increasing concern about the persisting and widening inequities, established the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, and is holding a conference, the aim of which is “to catalyze political support for national policies to address social determinants of health to reduce health inequities”, and

Whereas 5 Canada is the only major industrialized country to be without a national housing strategy, although the pockets of extreme poverty, homelessness, near homelessness and unsafe and/or overcrowded dwellings that exist in Canada (and which are particularly prevalent among Aboriginals, who include First Nations, Inuit and Metis) have high costs in terms of poor health, poor school achievement, increased involvement with the police and courts, as well as high levels of incarceration and unemployment through life; therefore be it

Resolved 1 that the National Council of Women of Canada reiterate from the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights as policy that everyone has “the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and one’s family, including food, clothing, housing, necessary social services, and to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his/her control” with “motherhood and childhood entitled to special care and assistance”; and be it further

Resolved 2 that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to develop an anti-poverty strategy that:

- a. works to improve daily living conditions of people, with special attention being given to single mothers, older women, refugee women, women with disability, and Aboriginal women living off reserve, at risk of food and shelter insecurity by increasing the Federal Social Transfer to the Provincial and Territorial Governments;

- b. hold the provinces and territories accountable for using additional benefits to social or income assistance recipients so that they have the resources to buy sufficient nutritional food and to live in stable, safe housing;
- c. implements a National Housing Strategy without delay;
- d. increases funding to on-reserve Aboriginals, given the exclusive federal responsibility for housing on reserves, in order to alleviate their food and shelter insecurity, paying particular attention to the unsafe, overcrowded and often mold-infected condition of much Aboriginal housing, and lack of access to safe drinking water; and
- e. develops an integrated national policy to reduce health inequities among Canadians by addressing the social determinants of health; and be it further

Resolved 3 that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to work with provincial and territorial governments to ensure that their minimum wage policies support a living wage.