



June 03, 2022

Honourable Anita Anand
Minister of National Defence

Dear Minister Anand

Re: Report on Military Misconduct - Justice Louise Arbour

The members of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) welcome the report, "Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)", delivered on May 30 by Justice Arbour as a breath of hope in solving this age-old problem.

Our members urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to immediately prepare plans for the implementation of all forty-eight (48) of the recommendations. If things are to change, action is needed now.

As the last of three reports completed over the past seven years, it is disappointing to find that it has taken this long to achieve any kind of real change. However, it is not surprising when it is noted that top officers during this time, many graduates of the Royal Military Colleges (RMCs), engaged in behaviors that have been identified as inappropriate and/or criminal.

Fortunately, there has been evolution. We are encouraged to note that you are the first woman to serve as Minister of Defence, that Commandant Josee Kurtz at RMC Kingston is the first female Commander, that Lt-General Jennie Carignan is responsible for leading culture change within the CAF, and that General Wayne Eyre has been vetted and assumed the position of Chief of Defence.

Although approximately 1/3 of the recommendations in Justice Arbour's Report are already in progress, it is discouraging to learn that other recommendations identified as critical will not be implemented immediately. We strongly urge you to complete your review and deliver your concrete plans as soon as possible to ensure rapid implementation of these vital recommendations.

Transfer of criminal offences to civilian courts that are more efficient and lead to faster resolution should be a priority. In addition, we encourage you to begin an immediate comprehensive review of RMC St. Jean and Kingston to ensure that officer training stresses the need for culture change, so women are able to fully experience and enjoy their preparation for leadership without the threat to their rights as persons.

Justice Arbour is an experienced and well respected arbiter of issues centering on human rights, and she is a dynamic international presence. She has the confidence of Canadians and has continually shown that she will speak truth to power, whether at home or in international locales. Do not let her expertise and personal credibility go to waste.

Patricia Leson, President
National Council of Women of Canada

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Canada is the traditional territory of Indigenous and Metis People. We are grateful to join with others in peace and hope, advocating for an improved quality of life for women, children, families, and society.

Note: The original draft of this letter was prepared by Monica Cullum, NCWC Justice Convenor.

C: Justice Minister David Lametti

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