



March 8, 2010

An open letter from CNA president Kaaren Neufeld, RN, MN

Dear colleagues:

International Women's Day (IWD) (March 8) is a global day celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future. Celebrations and activities take place the week of March 8.

We have come a long way. When IWD was celebrated for the first time in 1911, more than one million women and men attended IWD rallies campaigning for women's rights to work, to vote, to be trained, to hold public office and to end discrimination.

For its theme for 2010, the United Nations has selected "Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities: Progress for All." Status of Women Canada has chosen "Strong Women. Strong Canada. Strong World." This theme reflects the government's action to encourage more women and girls to participate in leadership roles.

IWD is a day of global celebration, but there is no room for complacency. Around the world, women still struggle on many fronts. For example, every year more than 500,000 women and girls die from pregnancy-related causes, amounting to one death every minute of the day. The vast majority of these deaths are preventable.

CNA is actively collaborating with other non-governmental organizations and with governments to address this inequity and to ensure that access to maternal health care is treated as a human rights issue. We call upon nurses across Canada to mark International Women's Day, to work in collaboration with others to address the inequities, and to support the role of women as equal partners in society, in Canada and around the world.

For a list of events celebrating International Women's Week 2010 in Canada, see:  
[www.internationalwomensday.com/search.asp?country=37](http://www.internationalwomensday.com/search.asp?country=37)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kaaren Neufeld'.

Kaaren Neufeld, RN, MN  
CNA President  
[president@cna-aiic.ca](mailto:president@cna-aiic.ca)