



Date: Friday December 5, 2008

Event: National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence
Against Women, Legislative Building, Victoria

Check Against Delivery

- Good morning.
- It's an honour to be here to speak on the eve of this solemn anniversary.
- It was December 6, 1989 that an armed male murdered 14 women in Montreal.
- This incident left a black mark on Canada's soul.
- We are here to remember the women who died as a result of that horrific shooting rampage.
- We are also here to remember all women who have lost their lives as a result of violence.
- Women who may be facing violence in their daily lives are also in our thoughts today.
- The reality is that violence against women not only affects women, it affects all British Columbians.
- It negatively impacts our lives, our communities, our neighbourhoods and our homes.
- We all want this to be the best place on earth to live and to raise a family.
- We want this for everyone.
- But, to fully realize that vision, we need to face the attitudes that allow this violence to take place.
- We need to stand together as a community to rise above the violence.
- It takes our understanding and our support.
- It takes our caring and commitment.

- There are things we can do and are doing to make British Columbia a safe place for all residents, and it's important to recognize these.
- In my ministry we have increased the funding to the Victim Services Division by \$17.1 million over three years.
- There are 156 victims' service programs in communities across B.C. to help victims of crime.
- In addition, the Crime Victims Assistance Program provides counselling to victims as well as financial assistance.
- And through the 'Victim Safety Unit' we ensure victims have access to safety services including notifying victims about the status of an accused or offender seven days a week.
- So we are trying to be there when victims of crime need help or after violence happens.
- Actually *preventing* violence from happening in the first place is even more challenging.
- My ministry now has the mandate for that challenge and we are preparing to meet it.
- We are leading the development of a new Inter-Ministry Coordinating Team on Violence Against Women.
- Headed by the Deputy Solicitor General, the team will bring together senior government officials from 11 ministries.
- It will develop an integrated, cross-ministry strategy to address violence against women in British Columbia.
- This is a significant step forward in our collective efforts to end violence against women.
- We will continue to work with community partners in the development of initiatives aimed at preventing violence before it starts.
- Everyone shares a vision where people can have hope for the future without the threat of violence.
- And it's my hope that we can work together to support those who are victims, and to prevent the causes behind it.
- I will be joined by our guests in a few minutes to light a candle.
- Each has its own special significance.

- The candles acknowledge the memory of those who have died as a result of violence against women.
- My candle represents this Day of Remembrance itself.
- Again, thank you for inviting me to speak at this important event.

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