

# NewsRelease



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Women launch complaint against Harper government for destroying the right to pay equity**

NEW YORK—Representatives of women’s groups and labour unions gathered at the United Nations yesterday, to announce that they will be filing a complaint against the Harper government with the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The complaint condemns the Canadian government for rushing controversial pay equity legislation through Parliament, which will make it extremely difficult for women in the federal public sector to demand equal pay for work of equal value.

The “notice of communication” to the UN was signed by representatives of more than 40 organizations, including the Public Service Alliance of Canada, the Syndicat de la fonction publique du Québec, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions and the Feminist Alliance for International Action.

In addition to criticizing the pay equity “poison pill” in the *Budget Implementation Act*, it also takes aim at the 2009 federal budget for failing to fix the employment insurance system during a time of economic crisis.

As it stands, only one third of unemployed women in Canada can access EI and even when they do, their EI benefits are often too low to both pay the rent and feed the kids.

“We just heard Helena Guergis speak to the UN Committee of the Status of Women, touting the Harper government’s supposed record on women’s rights. It’s appalling that she would set foot on an international stage to make claims about women’s equality while the government is in the midst of implementing policies that are trampling women’s equality rights at home,” said Patty Ducharme, PSAC’s National Executive Vice President.

The signatories to the “notice of communication” will work together in the coming weeks to formalize their complaint and submit it to the United Nations.

“We will not sit back and watch as our government retreats from its international obligations and undermines women’s equality rights,” said Robyn Benson, Regional Executive Vice-President, responsible for women’s issues at PSAC.

**Visit [psac-afpc.com](http://psac-afpc.com) to read the full text of the complaint, including a full list of signatories.**

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**For more information, contact:**

Andrée Côté, Women’s and Human Rights Officer, PSAC - 613-290-5899 (cell)

14-060309