



Global Affairs Canada: Feminist Foreign Policy Dialogue

Thank you for your contribution to the feminist foreign policy dialogue. We invite you to provide your contribution below, within the five (5)-page limit

Self Identification:

Name(s):

Pronoun:

Organisation:

Email:

Please indicate if you are submitting this contribution:

- As an individual
- On behalf of an organization
- On behalf of a group of organizations or individuals

Please indicate the areas covered in your contribution:

- Overarching considerations
- Enhanced diplomatic engagement
- Women, Peace and Security (WPS)
- Responding to evolving vulnerabilities
- Inclusive digital transformation
- Other: please specify

Written Contribution:

* Please respect the **five (5)-page limit**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this issue. I fully support your activities. However, I believe we are trying to do something without attention to the systemic of cultural environment that can enable bias or at least enables behaviours that can discount gender equalities or balance. I think we are trying to change the **process output without changing the process**. Rather than repeat what everyone else is saying, I would like to explore the question of: How can **all policy development and decision making** be viewed through the lens of feminist values or gender principles? Even policy that is gender neutral or without gender content? Do we develop policy that is mainly about women's representation, or all policy with a feminist value orientation? Or both? More peaceful, less adversarial?

In its current application by the government, the focus seems to be on gender issues such as gender equality, women's rights, power dynamics, violence against women, etc. This translates into a gender component in policy outcomes. My question: Is there something deeper available here?

Perhaps we need to explore the opportunities of deep feminism that could articulate principles and values that inform all policy development; even in issues that may not directly involve women. Solving the problem of nuclear weapons certainly may involve women, and the outcome of women's involvement may correlate directly to what technical solutions may look like. But perhaps men and women may arrive at the same solution independent of gender. Is there a difference in gender between anti-nuclear and pro peace? Between controlling wrongdoing and building integrity? Is peace keeping a feminist value?

The question becomes: Can anyone objectively develop any government policy that respects and utilizes feminist values or principles? If so, what are they? Perhaps:

- The imperative of avoiding imposed power-based solutions,
- The alternative of seeking relational solutions that include the primacy of peace, safety, security, non-violence, relief of suffering, compassion.
- The imperative of fairness and equality for all.
- The imperative of the ethic of care. All people count.
- The value of family and community wellbeing, kindness. Public good and harmony.
- The value of respectful voice, non-violent communication.
- The value of "human approaches" to justice and reconciliation, apology, forgiveness.

I am proposing attention to expanding government decision making cultures, systems and processes at its core, to have a gender equality and balance bias, as both essential to process and output. This must be inclusive of all genders and the diversity among us. It must be universal to governance. What education is needed here?

We can certainly note the movement “Black lives matter” as bringing attention to a segment of society that is more disadvantaged, vulnerable, suffering or oppressed among us. How we respond, defines our moral worth and human existence. In that sense, the duty of care requires us to go “beyond normal” in addressing specific concerns. Similarly, we have “gender equality matters”, where the “duty of fairness and care matters.”