

**THE HONOURABLE CAROLINE COCHRANE
MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STATUS
OF WOMEN**

NO.: 93-18(3)

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International Day of the Girl Child

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the International Day of the Girl Child. Plan International Canada, with all-party support from the Canadian Parliament, led global efforts to recognize this day. Their actions resulted in October 11th being recognized by the United Nations for the first time in 2012 as a day to champion the empowerment and rights of girls around the world. This is a powerful accomplishment, and I am extremely proud of our country's leadership in this effort.

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau (Our Prime Minister) put action behind the words, and gave us Canada's first cabinet with an equal number of men and women. Our Prime Minister took the lead in this and as elected Members we also need to stand and show our commitment.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Canadian Parliament did not let party differences hinder their support for establishing this day. In a show of cooperation, and serving as tremendous examples, they stood united in support of girls everywhere. Similarly we, as elected Members within our consensus government, must stand together united in our support to improve the circumstances of girls in the Northwest Territories and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, do not get me wrong, I am not asking Members to give up their seats, I believe in allowing the people to vote in the Member they feel best represents them. What I am asking is that each Member show our support by working to empower girls, by questioning why certain situations impact girls more than others, by continuously looking at ways to break down barriers, and by using a gender+ lens, that considers how each decision and every piece of legislation we pass, will impact the diverse populations within our territory.

Mr. Speaker, with our support, shown by standing firm beside them and lifting as many barriers as we can within our power, we will all make a difference in the empowerment of girls and equality of humankind.

I invite each Member of the Legislative Assembly to join me in recognizing the International Day of the Girl Child.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.