



Monday, September 14, 2020

Re: Sexual Harassment Incidents in Toronto's West End

We, the undersigned, categorically and whole-heartedly condemn the recent spate of attacks, assault, harassment, attempted abductions, and intimidation targeted toward women in the neighbourhoods of Toronto's west end.

We condemn *all* forms of gender-based violence.

We recognize that in tandem with the individual and interpersonal violence happening in Toronto's west end, there is ongoing racialized violence happening in Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour communities right now. We further acknowledge the missing and murdered Indigenous women of Canada, and the violence perpetrated upon their bodies.

We acknowledge and recognize that women have a fundamental right of freedom of mobility without fear of violence and sexual predators.

We recognize that in light of COVID-19, women are spending more time out-of-doors for their physical and mental well-being. This should not come at the cost of harassment, assault, and intimidation.

We are moved and inspired by the local organizing taking place around these occurrences. We support the work being done by women and local community organizers to discuss safety measures and solutions, and offer solidarity and support. Many of us were eager to participate in the *Take Back the Night March* on August 22nd, 2020, and look forward to further participation in these efforts, such as the next march planned for September 24th at Nathan Phillip Square.

There are multidimensional ways in which we can approach these issues now:

We demand that the perpetrators stop hurting, frightening, and causing harm to women, trans, and non-binary bodies. We should not have to live in fear, ever.

We ask that we collectively work towards a future of non-violence, gender equality, and peace. We call for a reinstatement of the provincial Strategy to End Gender-Based Violence Taskforce.

We are calling on all Torontonians to amplify the voices of women, and share the stories of those impacted across social media. The momentum on social media has been significant, and this has been the primary avenue through which many women have been notified of these events. We endorse the creation of some form of sexual assault warning system.

We are calling on the police force and the municipality to conduct a transparent, consultative process with the communities affected as quickly as possible. The aim of these consultations should be to determine what immediate, then medium-term measures can be taken so that women (including trans and non-binary people) feel safest as quickly as possible. By pooling our collective ideas together, we can create a solid foundation on which to further this work.

An attack against one of us, is an attack against all of us.

Yours sincerely,



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