

December 2016

TO ALL CUPE CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS

Dear friends, sisters and brothers:

**DECEMBER 10 – INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY
“STAND UP FOR SOMEONE’S RIGHTS TODAY!”**

The UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on Dec 19, 1948, and then proclaimed December 10 as Human Rights Day in 1950. The declaration came in response to the events of World War II, and the continuing colonialism that was rife at the time. It contains thirty articles on human rights that remain as strong today as they were over 65 years ago. The articles encompass a wide range of basic rights that are key to binding us together as workers and as a global community.

This year’s slogan for December 10 is “Stand Up for Someone’s Rights Today,” calling on us to be active global citizens and to champion change and freedom for all. With the most recent US elections, and the rise of hate crimes in the United States, no time is more appropriate than now for us to oppose injustices. Canada is not immune. It is our responsibility as global citizens to stand up for injustice everywhere.

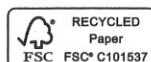
With rising fundamentalisms, shrinking democratic spaces, worsening environmental and economic turmoil and violence, we are reminded that every day must be a day to uphold human rights. Human rights include freedom of association and freedom of speech as well as the right to health, education, and equality, among other fundamental rights. As we prepare to celebrate International Human Rights Day, the events unfolding at the Muskrat Falls reservoir in Labrador and at the Dakota Access Pipeline in North Dakota remind us of the critical need to act in solidarity with Indigenous communities and the land and water protectors who continue to risk their lives for our futures.

We must also remember that harmful pieces of legislation such as the Conservative government’s anti-terror legislation, Bill C-51, is still on the books. This legislation strips Canadians of civil liberties, and has the potential to increase racial profiling, mass surveillance and carding activities by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). It is our responsibility to hold the current federal government to account and demand that they repeal this destructive bill.

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MARK HANCOCK – National President / Président national **CHARLES FLEURY** – National Secretary-Treasurer / Secrétaire-trésorier national

DENIS BOLDUC – FRED HAHN – DANIEL LÉGÈRE – KELLY MOIST – MARLE ROBERTS – General Vice-Presidents / Vice-présidences générales



As we reflect on our own Equality Statement, here are some suggestions for how your local can promote international human rights and mark December 10:

- Visit the website of the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights at <http://bit.ly/2es1YaR> to learn more about what's happening globally
- Educate yourself and your local on human rights issues. Read the UN Report on Canada's human rights record at <http://bit.ly/1lkwIDe>
- Recognize someone in your local or community who has contributed to improving human rights
- Invite a speaker on human rights to your local meeting
- Form a committee on human rights in your local, and
- Have a notice board to promote human rights activities, events, news and issues.

Start thinking and planning now to make December 10 a day that creates awareness of human rights issues, and inspires people to appreciate, to strive, and to ensure that all people enjoy human rights equally.

In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., "[An] Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

In solidarity,



MARK HANCOCK
National President



CHARLES FLEURY
National Secretary-Treasurer