

In Tiohtià:ke (Montreal) on unceded Kanien'kehá:ka [Mohawk] territory

# Le Centre communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques



## Inside this issue:

Cover page: November— Remembering strife	1
EC meeting, bulletin guide- lines	2
Centre update	3
Petition:	4
FFQ special general assem- bly	5
Asia bibiber –December	6
White Poppy	7
November-December Activi- ties	8
Calendar & Membership	9

## REMEMBERING strife near and far, present and past...



### Qu'en pensez-vous? What do you think?

- Let us know your thoughts about the bulletin.
- Que pensez-vous de notre journal?
- We encourage you to send in your stories and articles for upcoming newsletters in any language by the 25th of every month to:

• [sawccbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:sawccbulletin@gmail.com)

• Écrivez - nous à

[sawccbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:sawccbulletin@gmail.com)

## CENTRE Hours and Accessibility:



### Centre Hours/heure d'ouverture

Our centre is open 9-5 every weekdays. (Mon-Fri)

But there is a possibility of taking an appointment (at least a week in advance) in the evening from 6-8 pm on a Thursday

The Centre is wheelchair accessible

Le centre est accessible aux fauteuils roulants.

**Volunteers —** If you are interested in helping out at the Centre, please contact Juvaria (Ext. 104 or juvaria@bellnet.ca) to coordinate a meeting!

### **SAVE THE DATE:**

**Next Executive Council Meeting: Thursday, November 22, 2018 at 6pm.**

**All are welcome.**

People take part in a demonstration against racism in Montreal, Sunday, October 7, 2018. (THE CANADIAN PRESS/Graham Hughes) .

Some of our very own members were present to protest the CAQ government's proposed cuts to immigration and proposed legislation banning public servants (such as teachers, judges, and police officers) in positions of authority from wearing religious clothing in their places of work.



### **SAWCC Bulletin -- submission guidelines:**

SAWCC members are encouraged to send submissions to the Bulletin, to share items of interest with other members. Send submissions to: sawccbulletin@gmail.com

If using the post send to: SAWCC Bulletin, 1035 Rachel est, Montreal, Quebec, H2J 2J3

Submissions should reach by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Submissions may be original work or reprints (with permission) and can include --

art, reports, photos, information, opinion pieces, short fiction, poetry, announcements, recipes, etc.

Publication criteria are guided by SAWCC's commitment to not negatively discriminate on the basis of physical and mental ability, religion, colour, nationality, age, sexual orientation and identity, caste, and class. Publication is further guided by the feminist ethos of sisterhood, and principles of intersectionality\*, equality, equity, and transparency. As well, material that may compromise confidentiality of individuals without their consent will not be published.

SAWCC reserves the right to select, reject or edit submissions. When authorship identified, items reflect the views of the authors.

\*Intersectionality -- the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, that create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

## CENTRE NEWS: Juvaria Yasser, Gestionnaire du centre/ Centre Manager

October was a very busy month for all of us at SAWCC.

We saw and served many new immigrants and refugees at the centre. Our programs and activities went well. We started off the month with our open house with an intro to what women centres do and what services SAWCC offers in particular. Centre remained a busy and cheerfully noisy place throughout the month with classes in full swing and participants' presence in all activities.

Ce dimanche 28 octobre, les membres de la FFQ ont voté en assemblée générale, entre autres propositions sur la gestion féministe et les pratiques intersectionnelle, une proposition reconnaissant la capacité d'agir des femmes dans la prostitution/industrie du sexe.

En cohérence avec cette proposition, nos membres ont ensuite voté une résolution afin que **la FFQ lutte contre la stigmatisation et les barrières d'accès à la pleine participation à la société qui suivent ces femmes toute leur vie, même si elles quittent l'industrie, mais également contre la violence et les obstacles à la sortie de la prostitution/industrie du sexe que subissent les femmes qui sont dans cette industrie, et celles qui en sortent.**

Depuis notre assemblée générale dimanche dernier, **nous avons pris note des différentes réactions et interprétations au sujet des décisions que nous avons prises.**

Nous avons également pris note des attaques personnelles, menaces, commentaires racistes et transphobes qui se sont infiltrés dans les conversations.

**La lecture complète et détaillée de nos propositions prise en concertation avec l'ensemble de nos membres permet de la nuancer.**

**Nous avons ainsi été étonnées de lire que cette proposition donnerait un laisser-passer à la culture de l'agression alors que nous sommes convaincues qu'elle permet au contraire de mieux défendre les droits fondamentaux de toutes les femmes, en incluant toutes leurs expériences.**

La mission de la FFQ vise à accepter toutes les femmes dans notre mouvement, défendre la pleine humanité de chacune de ces femmes et par conséquent reconnaître les droits fondamentaux de toutes les femmes. Nous visons à ne laisser aucune femme de côté. **Nous soutenons toutes les femmes, sans jugement, à chaque étape de leur vie et dans toutes leurs batailles.**

**Nous refusons la vision selon laquelle ces femmes seraient seulement des victimes.**

**Elles sont présentes dans notre mouvement depuis des décennies et nous voyons en action quotidiennement leur résilience et capacité d'agir.**

Nous pensons que les fondations du combat féministe se construit sur un travail d'écoute de toutes les femmes. Nous tenons à saluer par ailleurs les nombreuses femmes qui ont eu le courage de témoigner dimanche dernier au micro de notre assemblée générale pour nous présenter les difficultés qu'elles rencontrent dans leur vie quotidienne.

Nous saluons aussi celles qui ont partagées leur expériences au cours des derniers jours et qui ont montré le besoin de soutenir toutes les femmes dans toutes leur expérience, en particulier les expériences de diverses formes de violence vécues dans l'industrie du sexe. ...4

Femmes Contre le Racisme et l'Islamophobie - Women Against Racism & Islamophobia

Quebec's newly-elected Premier, François Legault, plans to ban public service employees from wearing religious symbols in the workplace. Those who refuse to comply, will be transferred to another position — or fired. These petition starters believe that a ban on religious symbols is a threat to the fundamental rights of thousands of Canadians, with disproportionate effects on Muslim women. If you believe that faith-based discrimination has no place in Canadian society, add your name.

Barely elected, François Legault's government is already threatening the fundamental rights of thousands of Quebecers who want nothing more than to contribute to their society. His government has publicly stated that its first act as the newly formed government of Quebec will be to ban religious symbols for teachers, police officers, and judges. Those who do not comply would be transitioned to desk jobs or fired. We find it unconscionable that François Legault and the CAQ would use their newly-won power to bully and intimidate marginalized communities, threatening their livelihoods.

A neutral state does not favour or disfavour any religion, nor any person based on their belief or absence thereof. The Coalition Avenir Québec's (CAQ) intentions betray the very principles it claims to defend.

**We demand that François Legault and the CAQ**

**rescind their plans to institute a bill restricting Quebecers of various faith communities from occupying positions of authority.**

We will not gain anything from legalizing faith-based discrimination. We must instead continue to work together towards addressing injustices and building real equity for all people, regardless of their identities or appearance. We demand that the Quebec Government renounce division, discrimination and the exclusion of competent people from our public services. We call on our government to address the real issues and critical challenges facing our society.

(Search for petition on [change.org](https://change.org))



FFQ-Nous croyons fermement que notre position nous permettra de mieux faire ce travail en trouvant les bonnes solutions aux bons problèmes.

La proposition qui a été votée nous donne mandat pour **défendre les droits des femmes quel que soit leur expérience avec l'industrie du sexe. Leurs droits, leur sécurité, leur santé, leur autonomie, leur liberté d'expression sont autant de chantiers que cette proposition nous permet d'avancer.**

**Les luttes contre les rapports inégalitaires entre les hommes et les femmes ne seront jamais incompatibles avec les luttes pour les droits humains de toutes les femmes.**

Notre résolution inclut toutes les femmes dans l'industrie du sexe et vise à améliorer les conditions de vie et de travail de toutes. **Inclure ces femmes ne veut pas dire exclure les femmes qui subissent l'ignominie de l'exploitation sexuelle.** Inclure plus n'est pas exclure.

**C'est cela notre vision de la défense collective de TOUTES les femmes et de l'égalité pour toutes et entre toutes.**

**Le vote adopté avec l'ensemble de nos membres dimanche dernier s'inscrit dans ce principe.**

La mission de la FFQ vise à ne laisser aucune femme de côté. **Nous soutenons toutes les femmes, sans jugement, à chaque étape de leur vie et dans toutes leurs batailles.**



The FFQ [Quebec Women's Federation] of which SAWCC is a member held a Special General Assembly on 28<sup>th</sup> October to vote on resolutions that were presented to the Annual General Assembly in May, but there was no time to vote on them. The following is a brief announcement, followed by a Press Release. Both documents are google translated from French originals to be found at [ffq.qc.ca](http://ffq.qc.ca)



The resolutions that the FFQ position on the veil be that women be free to choose without coercion what to wear, was tabled much to the disappointment, frustration and chagrin of many of us present. Women who wear the veil presented their personal testimony, many supporters spoke up about the times and context in which we live – racist and xenophobic -- where it is dangerous for women who wear the veil . We will return to this. At the conclusion of the vote in a moving and powerful manifestation of support and allyship, dozens of women came to the mike to state their name, followed by “dissidence” (“disagree”). [SAWCC]

## FFQ

*This Sunday, October 28, was held the general assembly of the Federation of Quebec Women in Montreal. During this important moment of consultation among the members of the Federation, the debates led to the adoption of three proposals concerning:*

*Feminist management  
Intersectional practices  
Women and the sex industry*

*We would like to thank all the members for making this moment a unifying and listening time. [Resolutions at [ffq.qc.ca](http://ffq.qc.ca)]*

**PRESS RELEASE:** *On Sunday, October 28th, the members of the FFQ voted in general assembly, among other proposals on feminist management and intersectional practices. , a proposal recognizing women's ability to act in prostitution / sex work.*

*In keeping with this proposal, our members then passed a resolution to have the FFQ fight against the stigma and the barriers of access to full participation in society that follow these women all their lives, even if they leave the industry, but also against the violence and barriers to exit prostitution / sex industry experienced by women in this industry, and those who leave.*

*Since our general meeting last Sunday, we have taken note of the different reactions and interpretations about the decisions we have made.*

*We also took note of personal attacks, threats, racist and transphobic comments that have infiltrated the conversations.*

*The complete and detailed reading of our proposals taken in consultation with all our members allows to qualify it.*

*We were thus surprised to read that this proposal would give a pass to the culture of aggression while we are convinced that it allows on the contrary to better defend the fundamental rights of all women, including all their experiences.*

*The mission of the FFQ is to accept all the women in our movement, defend the full humanity of each of these women and therefore recognize the fundamental rights of all women. We aim to leave no woman behind. We support all women, without judgment, at every stage of their lives and in all their battles.*

*We reject the vision that these women are just victims.*

*They have been present in our movement for decades and we see in action daily their resilience and ability to act.*

*We believe that the foundations of feminist struggle are built on a work of listening to all women. We would like to acknowledge the many women who had the courage to testify last Sunday at the microphone of our general assembly to present us the difficulties they encounter in their daily lives.*

*We also commend those who have shared their experiences over the past few days and who have shown the need to support all women in all their experience, especially the experiences of various forms of violence experienced in the sex industry.*

*We firmly believe that our position will allow us to do this job better by finding the right solutions to the right problems.*

*The proposal that has been passed gives us a mandate to defend the rights of women regardless of their experience with the sex industry. Their rights, their safety, their health, their autonomy, their freedom of expression are all projects that this proposal allows us to move forward.*

*The struggles against unequal relations between men and women will never be incompatible with the struggles for the human rights of all women.*

*Our resolution includes all women in the sex industry and aims to improve the living and working conditions of all. Including these women does not mean excluding women who suffer the ignominy of sexual exploitation. Including more is not excluded.*

*This is our vision of the collective defense of ALL women and equality for all and all.*

*The vote passed with all of our members last Sunday is in line with this principle.*

## Pakistan: FORUM-ASIA welcomes Asia Bibi's acquittal on blasphemy charges and calls for the repeal of blasphemy laws

(Kathmandu/Bangkok, 2 November 2018) – The Asian Forum for Human Right and Development (FORUM-ASIA) welcomes the historic decision by the Supreme Court of Pakistan to acquit Asia Bibi, a Christian woman who was sentenced to death on blasphemy charges in 2010. Bibi was accused of insulting the Prophet Mohammed by fellow labourers after a heated argument.

Blasphemy laws in Pakistan have been increasingly used as a tool to persecute religious minorities. Section 295 of the Pakistan Penal Code carries a mandatory death penalty for anyone found guilty of defaming the Prophet Mohammad and life imprisonment for desecrating the Holy Quran.

Blasphemy charges serve as a pretext for religious extremism and vigilantism in Pakistan. Salman Taseer, ex-governor of Punjab, was killed by his own bodyguard in 2011 for his comments on reforms for blasphemy laws in the country. Shahbaz Bhatti, the first Federal Minister for Minorities Affairs, was assassinated in March 2011 for his criticism of the blasphemy laws of Pakistan. Rashid Rehman, a prominent Pakistani lawyer and a regional coordinator for the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), was assassinated in 2014 for representing a blasphemy accused.

Tehreek-i-Labaik-Pakistan, a political party, had threatened to paralyse the country if the Court sets Asia Bibi free. While the verdict of the Supreme Court is heartening and praiseworthy, it is unfortunate that a large crowd of hardliners gathered outside the Court demanding Bibi's execution.

More than 60 people have been killed outside the justice system since 1990 in cases related to blasphemy, which have been widely misused to avenge personal enmities, political differences, and tribal and community rivalries.

Pakistan has executed 496 people since 2014 on different charges, including blasphemy, amidst serious fair trial concerns. The Supreme Court of Pakistan has overturned 85% of death sentences during appeals primarily on the basis of faulty investigations and lack of credible evidence.<sup>[1]</sup>

FORUM-ASIA believes that blasphemy laws are retrogressive, discriminatory, and inconsistent with human rights standards and principles, especially the right to freedom of religion and expression. Welcoming the Supreme Court's decision to acquit Asia Bibi, FORUM-ASIA urges the Government of Pakistan: (a) to review all pending cases and ensure fair trial and speedy justice to all held for blasphemy charges; and (b) to repeal blasphemy laws as a matter of priority and abolish death penalty under all circumstances.



<https://www.forum-asia.org/?p=27610>

[1] [Counting the Condemned- Data Analysis of Pakistan's Use of the Death](#)

[Update: since the court verdict demonstrations were held against the verdict. As Asia's life is in danger it seemed the safest possibility would be for her to leave Pakistan. However in a deal with the protestors to end their demonstrations the government of Pakistan has offered Asia to them on a plate, agreeing that she will not be allowed to leave the country.]

## 11th November — REMEMBRANCE DAY and the White Poppy

As Remembrance Day [11<sup>th</sup> November, ed.] approaches, many people choose to wear a red poppy to commemorate the soldiers who have died in war.

It is worn as a symbol for those who have given their lives in battle and because poppies are the flowers which grew on the battlefields after World War One ended.

But, some people choose to wear a white poppy instead.

The White Poppy symbolises the belief that there are better ways to resolve conflicts and embodies values that reject killing fellow human beings for whatever reason (Nankai/Wikimedia Commons)

### **What are white poppies and why do people wear them?**

While the red poppy is worn specifically in honour of the armed forces and is distributed by the Royal British Legion [In Canada the Canadian Legion, ed.], the white poppy, given out by the Peace Pledge Union (PPU), a pacifist organisation, serves as an alternative.

According to the PPU, it is intended to remember all victims of all wars, rather than just those in which British service people were involved.

It also demonstrates a commitment to peace and to challenging any attempt to glamourise or celebrate war.

### **Who created them?**

The white poppies were first conceived by the Co-operative Women's Guild - a national organisation set up to provide women working in co-operatives a voice - in 1933, and they became used by non-violence and faith organisations. They were also frequently worn by the widows and children of dead soldiers.

### **Where can you buy them?**

While it is common to see red poppies worn in the UK during the Remembrance period, with millions sold each year, only around 100,000 white poppies are sold annually and they are more difficult to get hold of.

You can buy white poppies from the PPU website here and red poppies from the Poppy Shop here. [We will have some white poppies available at SAWCC.ed]

### **Why do some people feel uncomfortable wearing a red poppy?**

However, in recent years it has increasingly become utilised by political organisations, including Britain First, to promote their cause.

Others choose to eschew wearing poppies because of “poppy policing” or “poppy fascism” – in which people are lambasted for not wearing the flower.

“In Northern Ireland, for example, it became regarded as a Protestant Loyalist symbol because of its connection with British patriotism,” the PPU website claims.

“A growing number of people have been concerned about the poppy's association with military power and the justification of war.”

The Royal British Legion has a neutral attitude towards the alternative symbol. The organisation's website says: “We have no objection to white poppies, or any group expressing their views.

“We see no conflict in wearing the red poppy alongside the white poppy. We do ask that the items are not offered alongside each other however as this would confuse the public.”

(The Independent 5 November 2018

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/armistice-day-2018-white-popy-two-minutes-silence-remembrance-sunday-a8617996.html>)



## SAWCC ACTIVITIES FOR November-December 2018

Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<i>Info Session: STM- Navigation &amp; Security</i>
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<i>Discussion &amp; Celebration: Semaine Culturelle: Cultural Exchange, Qc &amp; its Different Cultures</i>
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<i>Info Session &amp; Discussion: Participating in the 12 Day Campaign: To End Violence Against Women- Women's Rights/ Gender Equality</i>
Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<i>Info Session: Retraite Quebec</i>
Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<i>Diwali Potluck- 12:30- 2:30. Please bring a dish to share</i>
Sat/ Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> OR 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec (Date to be confirmed) Venue: SAWCC	<i>Commemoration: Conference Justice for Milia Abrar</i>
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<i>Activity: 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. Commemoration</i>
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<i>Year-end Part at CEDA hall 1-4 pm</i>
22 <sup>nd</sup> Dec, 2018	<i>Centre closed for winter holidays. Centre will reopen on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019</i>
<i>No Tuesday activity on 11<sup>th</sup> &amp; 18<sup>th</sup> of December-</i>	



**Centre Communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques**

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37 years of sisterhood, strength, struggle and success 1981-2018

[www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca](http://www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca)



## November 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6 STM Session	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Cultural Exchange	14	15	16 EC meeting	17
18	19	20 Discussion Women & Violence	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 Retraite Quebec	28	29	30 Diwali Potluck	

### Membership Renewal

You may renew your SAWCC membership to ensure you get all the mailings and can participate fully in the organization.

Changes to your information (address, phone number, etc. email, etc.)? Download the membership form from our website, insert the correct information and send it along with your membership dues.

<http://www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca/EN/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Membership-form.pdf>

Please mail cheque to: SAWCC, 1035 Rachel est, Montréal, Qc., H2J 2J5.

Make cheque payable to: "South Asian Women's Community Centre".

Indicate in the note section: "membership".

Making a donation to SAWCC at the same time? Donations of \$20 or more will receive a tax-deductible receipt (for 2018 tax year).

If including a donation indicate as well the amount towards "donation".

#### Membership dues:

\$15.00 (for salaried)

\$7.00 (for non-salaried)