



THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF CANADA
LE CONSEIL NATIONAL DES FEMMES DU CANADA

For Immediate Release

GLOBAL MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH INITIATIVE

April 11, 2010 – The Harper government has placed the promotion of maternal and child health at the centre of its focus for the G8. *However*, the National Council of Women of Canada believes that a global maternal and child care initiative must include reproductive health care, and that includes contraception, family planning and access to legal, safe abortions.

“The fact that the government’s initiative spoke only to the need for nutrition, inoculations, clean water, and other non-controversial items, and then later ‘maybe contraceptives,’ speaks pointedly, NCWC President Karen Dempsey said, to the paternalistic attitude of the Harper government.”

UK Foreign Sec. David Miliband and US Sec. of State Hillary Clinton are both at odds with Prime Minister Harper’s “signature initiative,” stating comprehensive family planning has to be a vital part of this initiative. Ms. Clinton said one of the reasons that her government is promoting a global health initiative for mothers that promotes greater access to contraception is that family planning reduces the need for abortion. “If you are concerned about abortion, then women should have access to family planning,” Clinton said Tuesday. (Ap 1, 2010, Canwest News Service).

Development Minister Bev Oda, is being sent to discuss this initiative with her G8 colleagues in Halifax later this month. *The National Council of Women of Canada* strongly urges this government to promote a global maternal and child health initiative that includes comprehensive reproductive health care.

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