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Statement

50th Anniversary of Prisoners' Justice Day Observed – August 10, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OTTAWA (August 8, 2025) – This Sunday, August 10, I am humbled to join the Prison for Women (P4W) Memorial Collective in Kingston, Ontario, for the 50th anniversary of Prisoners' Justice Day, to honour those who lived and died at the former P4W and too many other prisons across Canada.

On Prisoners' Justice Day and every day, we stand in solidarity with prisoners, their families, supporters and allies across the country as they honour the memory of the youth, men and women who have died in prisons.

Prisoners' Justice Day began as a commemoration of the preventable death of a prisoner in segregation at Millhaven Penitentiary 5 decades ago. Today, it is recognized around the world as a day that marks the international struggles against continued neglect, silence and inaction regarding the human rights and legal protections of and for prisoners.

Institutions and services, including those for child welfare, mental health, the elderly and disabled, and especially prisons, must be transparent and accountable. We must ensure that [Tona's Law](#) (Bill S-205), and other recommendations of the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights with respect to the [Human Rights of Federally-Sentenced Persons](#) are implemented to end and remedy egregious human and *Charter* rights violations and ensure judicial oversight and accountability of correctional services.

This Prisoners' Justice Day, and every day, let us honour those inside, their loved ones, advocates and allies who are working tirelessly to uphold human rights and dignity for all. Let us honour those seeking an end to systemic discrimination, including based on race, gender and ability.

Let us honour all who lived and died in institutions and support the work of all whose courage and leadership both inside prisons and in their communities amount to decades of work to decolonize, decriminalize and decarcerate.

With humility and gratitude, we extend appreciation and respect to all marking this Prisoners' Justice Day. It is vital to hold Canada to account for its victimization, criminalization and imprisonment of those most economically, racially, socially and personally marginalized. Together, in solidarity, we can, and we must build a fair, just and inclusive future for all.