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### **Harper casts women aside in Cabinet Shuffle**

Ottawa – Prime Minister Stephen Harper has once again thrown away any opportunity to promote women in his cabinet showing his utter contempt for his few female caucus members, Liberal Status of Women critic Maria Minna said today.

”This Prime Minister has added more men to his cabinet when he had the opportunity to promote women into his cabinet with high-profile portfolios,” said Ms. Minna.

To add insult to injury, the Prime Minister even went so far as to take some responsibility away from Josée Verner, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women, and Official Languages, giving some responsibility for official languages to new junior cabinet minister James Moore.

”When only 11% of the Conservative Caucus is women and only a handful hold at best low-profile portfolios, you see that there is no commitment from this government on advancing equality for women,” said Ms. Minna.

Since 2006 the Conservative government has lashed out against women’s groups and has shut down regional offices of Status of Women Canada. The government removed “equality” as part of the mandate of the Women’s Program, slashed \$5 million from its budget, cancelled the Court Challenges Program, and denied valuable research and advocacy funding for women’s groups that have been around for decades promoting women’s rights and equality.

“Today we got confirmation that the Prime Minister has no confidence in the ability of his female members of Parliament and shows a chauvinistic attitude that is unbecoming of any Prime Minister,” concluded Ms. Minna.

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Contact:  
The Office of the Hon. Maria Minna  
(613) 992-2115