



# Official Statement on Final Report of Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces

*The Atlas Institute welcomes the public release by Minister of National Defence, Anita Anand, of the report by former Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour.*

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA, June 2, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Recognizing the wide-ranging effects military sexual misconduct (MSM) has had on current and former Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members, CAF Veterans, and their Families, the Atlas Institute for Veterans and Families (the Atlas Institute) welcomes the public release by Minister of National Defence, Anita Anand, of the report by former Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour, and the government's commitment to respond to the recommendations on how best to address this crisis.

The recommendations, in intent, honour the journey of those who have experienced military sexual trauma (MST), setting the stage for cultural and systemic change.

As noted by Minister Anand, as well as Justice Louise Arbour, the inclusion of external expertise consultation is imperative to the successful implementation of the recommendations put forward, especially as action in response to previous reports and recommendations has not sufficiently materialized.

The Atlas Institute recognizes the many roles different stakeholders can have in building a coordinated response to the recommendations and is committed to supporting the collaborative efforts of all partners in moving the 17 recommendations prioritized for this year forward in a thoughtful, strategic way, as guided by those impacted. Importantly, the voices of people impacted by MST must continue to be included throughout the process to guide the necessary changes and ensure they are as meaningful in execution as in intent.

In addition to participating, where possible and appropriate, in the roll out of the recommendations, the Atlas Institute is committed to continue improving the well-being of those impacted by MSM through its ongoing operations and work already initiated. This includes sharing information about peer support programs and services, identifying the needs of service providers and developing educational resources to support their interactions with Veterans and Veteran Families impacted by MSM, developing informational resources for Veterans and Veteran Families, ongoing participation in the Canadian Military Sexual Trauma Community of Practice, and ensuring that those with lived experience of MST are not only heard but that their wisdom informs and guides our work.

Further, it is important to be aware of the myriad of emotions that those impacted by MST may be experiencing after a landmark event like this, where anticipated actions are being discussed. The Atlas Institute has an online hub with easily accessible information, including a fact sheet about MST which provides links to available resources. This can be found at <https://atlasveterans.ca/knowledge-hub/military-sexual-trauma-mst/>.

We remain hopeful that, through prompt action on the recommendations that have emerged from the report, a coordinated system-wide approach will create the necessary environment for lasting change. And, we applaud the courage of the individuals who have publicly shared their experiences, no matter how difficult it was to do so, in the hope their stories could influence the path of others.

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