



# Native Women's Association of Canada

## Joint Statement on February 13th, 2014

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) delivered more than 23,000 signatures to the Government of Canada to call for a National Public Inquiry into the missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. For years, families and communities have called attention to the high numbers of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada to no avail.

NWAC has documented, through the five-year Sisters in Spirit Initiative (2005-2010), nearly 600 'known' cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. NWAC's research findings have been published and distributed as means to educate and promote dialogue. The tracking of those gone missing and/or murdered continues on, with the number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls increasing to over 800. NWAC is grateful that many other organizations and individuals continue to raise awareness of this serious and ongoing matter. Together, we are working towards a common goal to address this injustice.

Momentum among Canadians continues to build. First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples are rising up and embracing their own forms of expression and their own calls for action. Across Canada and internationally groups are calling for an end to gender-based violence through movements such as the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society Have a Heart Day, 1 Billion Rising, Memorial Marches and the Girls Action Foundation National Day of Action.

A year ago, NWAC launched a petition calling for a National Public Inquiry. Signatures as well as messages of solidarity poured in. More than 23,000 signatures were collected thus far. The petitions will be submitted to the Government of Canada on February 13<sup>th</sup>, to mark the final day of interviews of the Special Parliamentary Committee into the matter of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada.

A National Public Inquiry would be a crucial step in implementing a comprehensive and coordinated National Action Plan, which is what NWAC and their many supporters are calling for. "As our community organizations have repeatedly urged, such a response is necessary to address the scale and severity of violence faced by Aboriginal women and girls. Together, we demand action and secure commitments from all levels of government," stated Michele Audette.

In closing, we express our sincere thanks and gratitude to the families; we thank them for sharing their stories and for their leadership in this movement. You are the reason we continue to demand action. We are honored to walk beside you on this journey!

For more information on NWAC please contact:

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