



# Native Women's Association of Canada

## PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **NWAC not surprised by numbers of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women reported in RCMP's National Operational Overview**

**Ottawa, ON (May 16, 2014)** – The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) welcomes the RCMP's National Operational Overview, a comprehensive account of Canada's missing and murdered Aboriginal women. The RCMP's Overview reports 1,181 Aboriginal women that have gone missing or were murdered between the years of 1980 and 2012. Canada's 1181 missing and murdered Aboriginal women represent the number of families affected by the loss of a loved one.

For years, NWAC has been raising concerns about the alarming number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls from across Canada and have reported over 600 cases. "This report substantiates NWAC's claims and the RCMP's Overview only reinforces our position for a coordinated and compressive approach to ending the violence perpetuated against Aboriginal women and girls in Canada," said NWAC President Michèle Audette.

Since 2011, NWAC has been calling for all Canadians and the federal government to support the implementation of a national public inquiry into this urgent issue. President Audette states that, "we can no longer deny the existence or seriousness of this issue and we hope that this ends the complacency and indifference previously shown by the RCMP and the federal government towards our missing and murdered sisters".

In support of a national public inquiry, James Anaya, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and leading international organizations also recommends the need for a coordinated approach in addressing this issue. NWAC is waiting for a proactive response from the Canadian government to deal with this critical issue that continues to plague our communities.

NWAC is pleased that the RCMP's national strategy aimed at supporting the needs of high risk communities and views this as an opportunity to work in partnership with our communities in overcoming the systemic issues that have previously hampered calls for a national public inquiry.

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is founded on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nations and Métis women within First Nation, Métis and Canadian societies. As a national organization representing Aboriginal women since 1974, NWAC's mandate is to achieve equality for all Aboriginal women in Canada.

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