



Native Women's Association of Canada

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PUBLIC STATEMENT

OCTOBER 4TH SISTERS IN SPIRIT VIGILS – A MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

OCTOBER 1, 2014 (Ottawa, ON) - The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) will be reading this Statement on October 4th 2014 as part of the Sisters In Spirit Vigil— A Movement for Social Change:

October 4th is a day when we honour the lives of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls and support families who have been tragically touched by the loss of a loved one to violence. More than 100 SIS Vigils are registered from coast-to coast-to coast for October 4th 2014. No other event in Canada brings so many Aboriginal communities and Canadian citizens together to specifically celebrate, honour and support Aboriginal women and girls.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples as well as many other concerned Canadians are rising up and embracing their own forms of expression and their own calls for action. An inquiry would be a crucial step in implementing a comprehensive and coordinated national action plan that is necessary to address the scale and severity of violence faced by Aboriginal women and girls. Together, we must demand action and secure commitments from all levels of government.

October 4th is dedicated to honouring the lives of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls and support families who have been tragically touched by the loss of a loved one to violence. Vigils take many forms: a rally, a candlelight vigil, a workshop, a moment of silence, a walk, or a gathering of people to share memories and a meal. Together, the October SIS vigils have become a movement for social change and a reminder that our sisters will not be forgotten.

In closing, we express our sincere thanks and gratitude to the families. Many are here today and we thank them for sharing their stories. You are the reason we continue to demand action. We are honoured to walk beside you on this journey!

This public Statement is a very powerful way for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leadership to signal their support and commitment to the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. “NWAC invites all Aboriginal organizations across Canada to lend their support to this public Statement,” said President Michele Audette, adding that “now is the time to come together and demand action. When we show we are a united front, we hope all levels of government will listen.”

The 2014 public Statement specifically calls for “all levels of government to work with Aboriginal women and representative organizations.” The NWAC continues to call for a National Public Inquiry and a comprehensive national action plan to address violence against Aboriginal women and girls. NWAC thanks all their long-standing SIS Vigil partners for once again supporting NWAC’s work.

We look forward to your continued involvement and participation.

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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