



Native Women's Association of Canada

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NWAC Continues to call for a National Public Inquiry and a Comprehensive Plan of Action to Address Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls

September 17, 2014 (Ottawa, ON) - The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is pleased that the Government of Canada is regarding violence against Aboriginal women and girls as a priority and that the high rates of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls is an unacceptable situation that must end.

NWAC is somewhat pleased to learn that the Federal Government is committed to renew funding for an additional five years for existing programs that are aimed at improving the lives of Aboriginal women, as outlined in the "*Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crimes Against Aboriginal Women and Girls.*" However, it is important to note that some of the programs, such as the National Centre for Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains and the DNA Missing Persons Index, which will be very helpful in identifying the ethnicity of persons who have gone missing and were murdered, are for the general population and not Aboriginal-specific. "Nonetheless, putting in place this Action Plan is a step in the right direction," said Michèle Audette, President of NWAC.

"We know that the existing measures that have been in place are inadequate to address the high rates of violence and murders of Aboriginal women. NWAC is asking for a National Roundtable where all levels of Government can come together with national Aboriginal Organizations and family representatives to look at issues such as economic development, training, housing, education, health and child care to review existing programs and services. This review will enable the development of a seamless and comprehensive Action Plan and will help to prevent fragmented and disjointed programs and services," said NWAC President Michèle Audette.

"NWAC still sees the need for a non-partisan, National Public Inquiry that will assess the breadth of the problem and, once and for all, unveil the severity of the violence against Aboriginal women because predators feel that they can get away with the violence and murder of our women." "NWAC is willing to work with the Federal Government in a collaborative and meaningful manner to address the issue of violence as this remains a matter of great priority for NWAC, as it should be for all Canadians," continued Ms. Audette.

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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