

## **NWAC SUPPORTS MMIWG INQUIRY'S REQUEST FOR EXTENSION**

March 6, 2018

OTTAWA – ON – First and foremost, NWAC stands with survivors of violence and with the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in solidarity – your strength, courage, and truth push us to keep working for meaningful change. On September 1<sup>st</sup> of 2016, the Government of Canada officially launched the [National Inquiry](#) into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. As we approach the end of the Inquiry's two-year mandate, the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) endorses the Inquiry's request for an extension.

Earlier this year, NWAC's [Board of Directors](#) reviewed the progress at the Inquiry and passed a motion of support in favour of extending the National Inquiry for another two years. President Francyne Joe stated, "The Inquiry has a great deal of work to do on behalf of Indigenous women and girls. More than 760 families have testified or shared statements and many families and survivors want to have the opportunity to have their truths heard. Further, we are concerned that without an extension the Inquiry will not complete expert and institutional hearings. These parts of the Inquiry are crucial to identifying systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls, and without more time to complete a full array of expert and institutional hearings the Inquiry risks simply replicating existing research in this area. Systemic issues have led to gender-based physical and mental violence and the creation of socio-economic violence, which are inherent to settler colonialism and patriarchy."

In order for the National Inquiry to fulfill its mandate, accountability is paramount. President Joe added, "Accountability in the Inquiry remains a critical part of its ability to succeed. Key areas require improvement and NWAC will be releasing another [report card regarding these areas](#) in the next few weeks. This report will outline the progress and provide our recommendations."

NWAC continues to stay focused on the families and survivors throughout this Inquiry. There is a clear need for proactive and thorough community outreach from the Inquiry. This should include the establishment and participation of regional and issue specific advisory groups that would help identify and provide recommendations to end systemic causes of violence. Transparency needs to be a priority and the Inquiry needs to provide families with the resources necessary to meaningfully participate in the Inquiry, regardless of the outcome of the extension request. The success of this Inquiry has a real chance of providing positive actions for First Nations, Métis and Inuit women across the country.

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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, Métis and Inuit women. NWAC is an aggregate of thirteen Native women's organizations from across Canada and was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1974.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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