



Native Women's
Association of Canada

L'Association des
femmes autochtones
du Canada

NWAC FRUSTRATED AND DISAGREES WITH 6 MONTH MMIWG EXTENSION

June 5, 2018 – Ottawa, ON - NWAC is frustrated that a full two-year extension has not been granted to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry. This will mean many families will no longer have their chance to testify. NWAC has always supported a “family’s first” model and we are concerned at the six-month extension.

Canada has taken a paternalistic approach in their decision to prematurely end an Indigenous lead inquiry. There were questions from the beginning about the original two-year time table. President Francyne Joe stated, “Two years was never long enough to begin to attempt to solve the epidemic of violence against indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people that 150+ years of complex, layered, and systemic oppression and racism created. Minister Bennett stated that ‘little support’ was given by Indigenous organizations for a full two year extension, but NWAC has fully supported the two years that would greatly benefit the families.”

The full two-year extension support was based on the work plans that were shared with NWAC when the extension was first requested. Those work plans clearly laid out a two-year extension that would do significant additional work and a sustaining aftercare initiative for families following the inquiry.

A six-month extension raises concerns regarding:

- Appropriate long term after-care;
- The option to reopen community hearing;
- The necessity of engaging in one or two more expert and institutional hearings that may discuss extremely important topics such as criminal justice system and child welfare system;
- The urgency to reopen the registration for families to give testimony and speak their truth;
- A strong risk that the Inquiry will simply duplicate existing research and provide recommendations that lack “teeth”;
- The necessity to operate at “high-speed”, risking burn out of key staff who the Inquiry won’t have the time or money to replace;
- Lack of time given to parties with standing for final written submissions, leaving this process rushed and limiting the detail and care parties with standing will be able to submit.

NWAC disagrees that Canada cannot provide the two-year extension and act on recommendations simultaneously. We will continue to monitor and provide support to families and offer recommendations through our report cards on progress at the National Inquiry. Additionally, we will pressure the government to remedy this situation. NWAC will also further engage with grassroots communities and international human rights organizations.

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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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