



Native Women's
Association of Canada

L'Association des
femmes autochtones
du Canada

Head office

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August 31, 2021

Hon. Carolyn Bennett
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Bennett,

It has come to our attention that you have appointed Mr. Bruno Steinke as the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Secretariat (MMIWG Secretariat) Executive Director.

In a CBC news article dated August 12, 2021, you are quoted as saying, "We know that Indigenous organizations are best suited to delivering services and support to Indigenous peoples in a culturally safe and respectful way." Yet, you appointed someone who is neither Indigenous nor a woman as the Secretariat Executive Director who will be responsible for working with Indigenous organizations on the MMIWG file.

We are deeply concerned, and fail to see how a person who is not a woman or an Indigenous person can possibly relate to Indigenous organizations and Indigenous women and girls when it comes to addressing the violence that Indigenous women and girls have endured.

Furthermore, there was no consultation with NWAC about the appointment of the MMIWG Secretariat Executive Director or what credentials are required for this position. Again, this is another example of the Government of Canada not respecting the opinions, views, or lived experiences of Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people in this country.

We continuously communicate with you and your department about the challenges that Indigenous women and girls face in this country and you continuously ignore us. It is clear you are intent on doing what you think is right, but not what is right for Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people. Colonialism is clearly alive and well in this country!



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I would appreciate it if you would let me know the rationale for selecting Mr. Steinke as the MMIWG Secretariat Executive Director so I can advise the grassroots women about your decision-making process to appoint Mr. Steinke.

Sincerely,

Lynne Groulx
CEO, Native Women's Association of Canada