



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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# STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

May 5, 2020

## BC Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Statement on the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls

*(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George, BC – May 5, 2020)* – Today marks a National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls in the United States. Like the colonial genocide of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals in Canada, American Indian and Alaskan Native women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals face alarming rates of violence.

“I stand in solidarity with families and advocates across turtle island in calling for an end to the apathy and lack of political will that has defined the public’s response to the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals. It is a tragedy each time someone goes missing, and it is a gross violation of human rights,” stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee.

“No one should be ignorant, but should instead make themselves aware of the causes and range of impacts of such violence. Everyone has a responsibility to take swift action to prevent and respond to violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals.”

“All levels of government must implement meaningful strategies and law reform to address the root causes and risk factors of violence in full partnership with tribal governments and communities. Tribal sovereignty and cooperation between jurisdictions must be enhanced. Reform in justice and policing must be advanced. Further, culturally appropriate supports and services must be made widely accessible.”

5,646 Native women were reported missing in the United States in 2017. More than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetime, and in some areas, are victims of homicide at 10 times the national average. Too often the perpetrators of these violent crimes and the colonial systems that perpetuate racism and sexism, are not held accountable. Today, join in honouring the memory and lives of these women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals, raising awareness, and shaping a new future.

For more information you may be interested in visiting the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Centre <https://www.niwrc.org/> or reading the National Inquiry’s report on MMIWG <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

#honouringourancestors



If you need help or someone to talk to:

- If you are in immediate danger or fear for your safety or that of someone else, please call 911.
- If you are not in immediate danger, call [VictimLink BC](#) at 1-800-563-0808 for information about all services that are available throughout BC. Service is available in over 150 languages.
- Ending Violence Association of BC's [Need Help information](#):
  - Explains the types, dynamics, and impacts of violence against women
  - Explains many known risk factors
  - Tells you who to call in an emergency
  - Describes the kinds of services that are available to help you
  - Tells you about safety planning
  - Provides links to other resources and information
- [Battered Women's Support Services](#) can assist with emotional support, safety planning, and legal advocacy
  - Call at 604.687.1867 or toll free at 1-855-687-1868
  - If you're unable to speak safely, please text 604-652-1867 or email [intake@bwss.org](mailto:intake@bwss.org)
- KUU-US Crisis Line Society is an Aboriginal-specific 24/7 crisis line serving the entire province of BC. Toll-Free: 1-800-588-8717. Youth Line: 250-723-2040. Adult Line: 250-723-4050.
- [Here2Talk](#) provides single-session mental health counselling by app, phone or online chat (available 24/7)
- Talk 4 Healing provides 24/7 culturally sensitive counselling, advice and support to Indigenous women in Ojibway, Oji-Cree, Cree, English, French at 1-855-554-4325. Online service at [www.talk4healing.com](http://www.talk4healing.com)

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