



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

October 4, 2021

BCAFN Calls for the Full Implementation of the Calls for Justice on National Day of Action for MMIWG2S+

(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George, BC and Heiltsuk Territory, Bella Bella, BC) – October 4th is an annual day to honour the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, 2S, (Two-Spirit) and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual people (LGBTQQIA+), support families and front-line advocates, and work for healing and change. Today, across the country vigils, events, and red dress campaigns serve as powerful community expressions of grief, solidarity, love, strength, and healing. The BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) supports the calls of grassroots Indigenous women, 2S, and LGBTQQIA+ people and organizations for accountability and action.

The BCAFN is disappointed that calls to implement the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice fully and swiftly have so far been ignored by the provincial and federal governments. It's been over two years since the National Inquiry released the Calls for Justice, and neither Canada nor BC has an implementation plan in place to see the Calls for Justice implemented in partnership with Indigenous peoples. While many valuable initiatives were noted in the National Action Plan released on June 3, 2021, the Plan was notably missing concrete components required for implementation, and this has yet to be rectified.

Regional Chief Terry Teegee stated, "The National Inquiry found that the violence it heard about constitutes genocide against Indigenous peoples, and in particular women, girls, 2S, and LGBTQQIA+ people. If anything, this crisis has only intensified since the National Inquiry. Canada has legal obligations to end the violence, and to provide redress, restitution, and compensation. Right now, we have Indigenous women and gender diverse leaders willing to lead and partner in the implementation of the Calls for Justice. In fact, they are already doing that hard work in communities throughout our territories and have been for decades. What we need now is real political leadership from BC and Canada to resource and support the proper coordination of this work."

BCAFN Women's Representative Louisa Housty-Jones stated, "Today as we remember the lives of those who have gone missing or been found murdered, I want to honour the families and everyone who has been working to raise awareness about MMIWG2S+, and those who are working in community to support the wellbeing and leadership of Indigenous women, girls, 2S, and LGBTQQIA+ people. Your leadership and dedication are the force that has brought us to this point in our history of truth-telling and will provide the foundation for change."

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