



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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PRESS RELEASE

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BCAFN Demands National Action on National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George and Heiltsuk Territory, Bella Bella, BC) – On this day, May 5th, the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) remembers and honours the women and girls, daughters, mothers, grandmothers, aunties and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, who were violently taken away from us. In addition, we acknowledge and hold close to our hearts the survivors of gender- and race-based violence, and the families and loved ones of the missing and murdered whose lives have been altered forever. Today is Red Dress Day - National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the BCAFN calls for national action on the epidemic of violence happening across this country.

“I’m disappointed that the federal and provincial governments have not moved more swiftly and fulsomely to mobilize all arms of government to respond to the National Inquiry’s Calls for Justice in partnership with First Nations peoples and address the ongoing genocide of First Nations women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. While we acknowledge that some commitments and initiatives are underway, much more resources and supports will be needed to have the impact that we desperately need,” stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee. “Too many lives continue to be lost and destroyed as inaction and apathy toward the human rights of our peoples continues almost three years after the conclusion of the National Inquiry.”

Last year in 2021 the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) held regional engagement sessions across the country on the development of the MMIWG2S+ National Action Plan. The BC region’s [What We Heard Report](#) contributed input from MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+ family members and survivors to inform the implementation of the 231 Calls for Justice in our region.

BCAFN Women’s Representative, Louisa Housty-Jones stated, “Family members, advocates, front-line workers, and First Nations leaders have shown immense patience, courage and love, repeatedly bringing forward their stories and recommendations for change. Now is the time for all governments to demonstrate that they have heard and take seriously these truths; working in true partnership to breathe life into this work. It is each our responsibility to work for a world of safety and opportunity for ourselves, our communities, and the next generations. I firmly believe this vision is possible.”

#honouringourancestors



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Indigenous women are at least 5.5 times more likely to be murdered than non-Indigenous women. Factors that play a significant role in this horrific statistic include, colonial policies - residential schools, 60's Scoop, forced relocation, proximity to work camps, racism, historical and ongoing trauma, and social-economic disparities. In addition, emerging data and reports have shown violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people have increased during the pandemic.

Helpful links:

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls - <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

The REDress Project - <https://www.jaimeblackartist.com/exhibitions/>

Building a national action plan with partners - <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1590950479157/1590950564663>

What We Heard Report: 2021 BCAFN Missing and Murdered Women, Girls, 2-Spirit+ (MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+) Regional Engagement Process for the Development of the National Action Plan on MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+ -

https://events.bcafn.ca/regionalengagementdevelopnationalactionplanmmiwg2s/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2021/10/BCAFN-What-We-Heard-Report_Digital.pdf

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