



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

[www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca)

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
February 14, 2023

### BCAFN Welcomes MMIWG2S+ Family Members and Survivors to BC

**(*xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.*)** –The BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) welcomes MMIWG2S+ family members and survivors from across the country to British Columbia to attend the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National MMIWG2S+ Gathering, being held in Vancouver from February 14<sup>th</sup> to February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The Gathering will begin following the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual February 14 Women’s Memorial March, which begins on the corner of Main and Hastings at 12:00 pm and proceeds through the Downtown Eastside; marking the locations where loved ones were last seen or found with remembrance and ceremony.

Regional Chief Terry Teegee stated, “Despite the Federal Pathway to address missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people the violence across the country continues at staggering rates. Action to prevent and respond to this prevalent violence falls woefully short of what is needed to protect, promote and uphold the basic human rights of Indigenous peoples, a primary goal of the federal government’s United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. The Gathering this week is an important opportunity to bring MMIWG2S+ family members and survivors together for mutual strength and support. It also provides space to reflect collectively on the work that has been completed to date and what remains outstanding. These events provide a national platform to bring awareness and communicate the urgency that is needed to end violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.”

The Gathering will include updates from the AFN and federal government as well as providing sessions for family members and survivors to discuss the National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People, the First Nations Action Plan, and the implementation of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girl’s Inquiry’s 231 Calls for Justice.

Orene Askew, also known as DJ O Show, BCAFN 2SLGBTQQIA+ Representative shared, “I send my prayers for strength and love to all MMIWG2S+ family members and survivors. Over the next few days, families from across Indian country will come together to remember and honour their beloved gender-diverse relatives and sisters. Grief and loss are two things most of us know very well, but as we continue our healing journeys and advocate for the diverse needs of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people we can change the situation on the ground today and improve the reality for future generations of our peoples. We do not do this work in vain, and we do not do it alone. Allies are all around us, and I know the future generations will thank you for the work you do. Chen kwenmantumiyap!”

#honouringourancestors



The BCAFN continues to advocate for greater action and accountability from the governments and people of Canada. Long-standing BCAFN Women's Representative, Louisa Housty-Jones stated, "Progress on implementing the National Inquiry Calls for Justice isn't moving with the urgency that is needed. We continue to press all individuals and sectors across all levels of governments in Canada to reflect and accept responsibility for how the Calls for Justice impact you, and work in partnership with Indigenous peoples to take action. As a foundation for this work, I also urge governments to support coordination, resourcing, and oversight and accountability. These conditions are imperative for change."

-30-

**For further information, contact:**

Annette Schroeter, BCAFN Communications Officer, phone (778) 281-1655

