



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

May 5, 2023

BCAFN Calls for Commitments to Action on the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People

(Lheidli T'enneh, Heiltsuk Nation and Squamish Nation) – Today is Red Dress Day, the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. The BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) remembers and honours those who have been lost to systemic violence and calls for concrete improvements to prevention and response measures to create lasting change. BCAFN acknowledges the families, survivors, and advocates who have ensured that this issue remains in the national attention and who work for daily to create change for the future generations of women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

“Indigenous people are affected by the national crisis of MMIWG2S+ and we all have an important role to play in keeping our families, friends and communities safe. All Canadians and levels of government must also take steps to dismantle and address colonialism, racism, and sexism, which are the underlying causes of the disproportionate violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. In particular, I’m calling on the governments of BC and Canada to partner with First Nations, families, and advocates to ensure that concrete and meaningful progress is made on each of the immediate and short-term priorities identified in the National Action Plan, and for sustainable and adequate capacity funding for all Indigenous partners so that this work can be advanced in alignment with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee.

The BCAFN Women’s Representative, Louisa Housty-Jones stated, “Across the nation there will be vigils, marches, and red dress campaigns, which serve as powerful expressions of grief, solidarity, love, strength, and healing. I urge everyone who is unfamiliar with this issue to take the time to learn about the reality of MMIWG2S+ and identify how you can be an ally and be a part of the social and political transformations that must take place.”

Orene Askew, also known as DJ O Show, BCAFN 2SLGBTQIA+ Representative, stated, “I stand in solidarity with families of lost loved ones and survivors. They are the heart of this movement, which will not relent until we can claim the safety and the wellness that Indigenous peoples deserve. In unity, we call for action, partnership, transparency, and accountability. Wear your red proudly for those we remember!”

Helpful links:

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

BC Government Updates - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/crime-prevention/community-crime-prevention/taking-action-mmiwg>

#honouringourancestors



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Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Updates - <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1590523702000/1590523850562>

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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For further information, contact:

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

