



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

Website: www.bcafn.ca

BCAFN SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
Lheidli T'enneh, Prince George, BC
March 8-9, 2018

Resolution 03(d)/2018

SUBJECT: NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

DECISION:

WHEREAS:

- A. In Canada, Indigenous women are five times more likely than other women to die as a result of violence and this problem is a national and international crisis. Violence against Indigenous women and girls must be addressed and eliminated;
- B. In order to redress systemic racism and eliminate the violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls within Canada, there is a responsibility by all to act;
- C. The United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* has been adopted without qualification by the government of Canada, alongside the provincial government's commitment to implement the *Declaration*, and affirms:
 - Article 21(2):* States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of Indigenous elders, women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities.
 - Article 22(2):* States shall take measures, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, to ensure that Indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination;
- D. A National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was launched September 1, 2016, with a Terms of Reference including inquiring into and reporting on systemic causes of all forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada, and to report by December 2018. The Inquiry has stated that they will fulfill this mandate by holding Part I – Family, Part II – Institutional, and Part III – Expert Hearings, led by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller;
- E. 'Meaningful opportunities for engagement' may include but are not limited to:

- Sufficient funding to enable Indigenous, front-line, grassroots, and women’s organizations can be represented by legal counsel of their choosing and without restriction on how funding can be used for legal counsel;
 - That participation of legal counsel is not restricted at the discretion of the Commissioners or the Privy Council Office;
 - That ample time is afforded to hearing on subjects such as police accountability, the child welfare system, criminal justice system, and other institutions that perpetuate discrimination against Indigenous peoples, and that organizations with standing have adequate time to cross examine witnesses and provide legal submissions;
 - That ample time is afforded to hearings to examine all forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada, including underlying socio-economic, cultural, institutional, and historical causes contributing to the ongoing violence and vulnerable positions of many Indigenous women and girls.
 - That organization and their legal counsel are provided with access to all documents disclosed to the Inquiry with a minimum of one month’s notice to effectively prepare for these hearings, and two month’s advance notice for hearing dates;
 - That Indigenous women and survivors are considered experts on these subjects and are called to provide testimony at these hearings;
 - That organizations and their legal counsel are provided with an opportunity to address the Inquiry with closing submissions and recommendations based on the evidence heard at Part I, II, II noted above;
- F. Two Part I Hearings have been announced for the region of British Columbia, and one Part II Expert Hearing has been held nationally, with no announced plan or schedule of further Part II or II Hearings. Part II and II Hearings are the key hearings to investigate the actions of the government, institutions, and experts in order to make lasting change on this issue;
- G. The BCAFN and other like-minded organizations are only able to participate in a limited manner in Part II and III hearings; and
- H. Aboriginal organizations have repeatedly requested further information, schedules, and plans from the Inquiry regarding Part II and III Hearings to no avail, preventing the preparation of materials, submissions, and thus limiting organization’s ability to meaningfully participate in this Inquiry.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The BC Chiefs-in-Assembly fully support families, survivors, and friends who have bravely shared their stories with the Inquiry through the Part I Hearings;
2. The BC Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the BCAFN to participate in the Inquiry, including participation at hearings and making written submissions, provided there is opportunity for meaningful engagement, and subject to available resources; and

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 9th day of March, 2018, at the Ramada Plaza, Prince George



Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief

3. The BC Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the BCAFN to call on the Prime Minister, Minister Carolyn Bennett, Minister Jane Philpott, and Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould to ensure that the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry are met through an effective systemic review through Part II and III Hearings to fulfill the promise to families that change will result from their contributions and stories.

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Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief