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# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**December 9, 2008**

### **Some victim's families still await justice on first anniversary of Pickton verdict**

**Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver** – One the first anniversary of the conviction of Robert William Pickton on six counts of murder, the First Nations Leadership Council is encouraging the Attorney General's office to proceed with a trial on the 20 remaining counts of murder.

"The November 2007 conviction of Robert Pickton brought a close to a sad chapter in the lives of six women; however there has been no closure for many of the other victim's families", said Grand Chief Doug Kelly, a member of the First Nations Summit political executive.

"The Crown must plan to proceed with a second trial for Robert Pickton on all outstanding counts in order to give the remaining victims' families their day in court and a chance at closure" added Chief Kelly.

"On this sad and solemn day our hearts and prayers go out to all the families who were completely devastated by the tragic loss of their daughters, sisters, Aunties and Mothers", said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. "There exists an absolute need to hold an additional trial for the other 20 women to enable their families to move beyond photos of their murdered relatives to a place of closure. There must be a full public inquiry to expose the systemic deficiencies and failures within the criminal justice system that directly contributed to the tragic death of so many women. Police and civic officials must be held to account for their negligence."

There are more than 511 missing and murdered Aboriginal women (by some accounts as many as 2000) in Canada. These staggering numbers represent the indifference of the state to the treatment of Aboriginal women and other vulnerable groups.

"We must bring an end to this indifference. Canada must call for a full public inquiry into how and why the justice system failed these women and their families", said Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, BC Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations. "These women must not be dismissed as the pursuit of justice demands equitable treatment of all citizens".

The call for justice for the victims' families is especially significant given tomorrow's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations Human Rights Day).

*The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. The Council works together to politically represent the interests of First Nations in British Columbia and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in British Columbia.*

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