



For Immediate Release
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First Nations Summit renews call for National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women following report by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – Leaders of the First Nations Summit (FNS) are applauding the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) for their detailed report entitled *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in British Columbia, Canada*, which was released earlier today.

“We commend this esteemed international body for looking into the disturbing and disproportionate issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Canada, and in particular British Columbia”, said Cheryl Casimer of the FNS political executive. “The IACHR report clearly acknowledges what indigenous people in this country have known all along, that this issue is not just a result of criminality but is also rooted in, and a result of, the historical and systemic socio-economic discrimination faced by indigenous women and girls across this country. Any solution must include a detailed examination of all contributing factors. As the report states, *addressing violence against women is not sufficient unless the underlying factors of discrimination that originate and exacerbate the violence are also comprehensively addressed*”.

“We fully support the findings and recommendations of the IACHR and encourage the federal and provincial governments to do so as well”, said Robert Phillips of the FNS political executive. “We question how much longer the Harper government can continue to ignore the calls for a National Inquiry into the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls across Canada given the findings and recommendations of this recognized and respected international body. We cannot continue to stand by and accept band aid solutions while week after week, more indigenous women and girls are added to the growing list of those missing or murdered”, added Phillips.

“We must stand together and recognize that this is not an “Aboriginal” issue, but a Canadian societal issue that should be of concern to all Canadians and that will require a coordinated response by all governments and First Nations alike. The First Nations Summit will continue to push for justice and a sincere effort to protect, indigenous women and girls across Canada, who are some of the most vulnerable in Canadian society”, concluded Ms. Casimer.

The First Nations Summit has been one of countless aboriginal organizations that have continually called on the Harper Government to establish a full public inquiry into the deep and disturbing issue of missing and murdered aboriginal women across Canada.

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The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. The Summit is also a NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Further background information on the Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

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