



Press Statement

National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people

Today is National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, also known as Red Dress Day. It is a day set aside to honour the memory of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who have been lost to violence. Today, we stand with the families, friends, and communities who have lost a much-loved daughter, niece, sister, mother, grandmother, or auntie. We honour their memories as we continue to work for change.

After forty years of activism lead by Indigenous women, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called a national inquiry into MMIWG, and in 2019, this inquiry released its *Final Report, Reclaiming Power and Place* in which it concluded that Canada was guilty of genocide for failing to protect Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people from violence. The Report exposes the vast human rights violations that are the foundation for the systemic violence occurring in Canada against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people:

“The significant, persistent, and deliberate pattern of systemic racial and gendered human rights and Indigenous rights violations and abuses – perpetuated historically and maintained today by the Canadian state, designed to displace Indigenous Peoples from their land, social structures, and governance and to eradicate their existence as Nations, communities, families, and individuals – is the cause of the disappearances, murders, and violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, and is genocide. This colonialism, discrimination, and genocide explains the high rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people”.

The Report calls for transformative justice and shares the truth of family and community members as well as incorporates 231 Calls for Justice directed toward Canada’s government, legal system, social services, and all colonial institutions and Canadian citizens.

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples National Chief, Elmer St. Pierre, expresses his deepest sorrow for the families: “Today is meant to bring awareness of MMIWG and remind our governments and public institutions of their responsibilities to Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and ending violence in all its many forms. Still, we are frustrated with the delay of the federal government’s long awaited national action plan in response to the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls”.

Two years after the Final Report of the National Inquiry, the action plan is to be released on June 3, 2021. Hopefully, it will answer the National Inquiry’s calls to develop and implement a national action plan to address violence against Indigenous women and girls.

For more about the National Inquiry, please see <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca>
For more information about Jamie Black and the origins of the ReDress, please see <https://www.jaimeblackartist.com/exhibitions/>

For media interviews, please contact:
Jessica Dawson, Executive Assistant
613-747-6022
j.dawson@abo-peoples.org

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is the national voice representing the interests of Métis, status and non-status Indians, and Southern Inuit Indigenous People living off-reserve. Today, over 70% of Indigenous people live off-reserve.