

BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS



Main Office:
1004-Landooz Road,
Prince George, BC V2K 5S3
Phone # 250-962-1603
Fax # 250-962-9552
Toll-Free # 1-877-621-1603

Vancouver Office:
1020-1200-West 73rd Avenue,
Vancouver, BC V6P 6G5
Phone # 778-945-9911
Fax # 778-945-9916
Toll-Free # 1-833-381-7622

May 20, 2021

Honourable Carolyn Bennett
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Government of Canada
Via email: Carolyn.Bennett@canada.ca

Gina Wilson, Co-Chair, National Action Plan Core Working Group
Deputy Minister, Diversity and Inclusion and Youth
and Senior Associate Deputy Minister
for Canadian Heritage
Government of Canada
Via email: Gina.Wilson@cfc-swc.gc.ca

Valerie Royle, Co-Chair, National Action Plan Core Working Group
Deputy Minister, Tourism and Culture
and Deputy Minister, Women's Directorate
Government of Yukon
Via email: Valerie.Royle@yukon.ca

Honourable Mike Farnworth
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Government of British Columbia
Via email: PSSG.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Bennet, Co-Chair Wilson, Co-Chair Royle, and Minister Farnworth

RE: Roundtable with the Coalition on MMIWG2S in BC

I am writing to request that yourselves, as Ministers responsible for the National Action Plan within the federal and provincial governments, and Co-Chairs of the National Action Plan Core Working Group convene for a roundtable discussion to solicit input into the National Action Plan on MMIWG2S+ with the members of the Coalition on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls in BC (the Coalition).

The Coalition is an alliance of organizations and individuals that came together in 2010 at the time of the Oppal Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Women in British Columbia. The Coalition includes a broad range of organizations representing Indigenous women and their allies in women's anti-violence, human rights, and labour organizations. Members have deep knowledge and expertise, and lived experience of discrimination and violence; some are family members and friends of murdered and disappeared women, girls, and two-spirit people; and many have been engaged for years in front-line, grassroots anti-violence work on the streets and in shelters. Members of the Coalition also have expertise in policy development and analysis

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regarding Indigenous rights, child welfare, and policing, as well as knowledge and practice in human rights, civil liberties criminal, constitutional, and international human rights law. Further, members of the Coalition had standing as parties at the Oppal Inquiry and at the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Many members of the Coalition were engaged in work to prevent the disappearances and murders of Indigenous Women, Girls and LGBTQQIA folks, long before the National Inquiry was appointed, as well as throughout the time of its deliberations.

Since the release of the Inquiry's Final Report, members of the Coalition have been attempting to secure inclusion in the process of developing the National Action Plan in order to contribute our knowledge and expertise, and to ensure that the Plan will be an effective response to the crisis. As a part of this Coalition, the BC AFN has witnessed and supported the Coalition's efforts to be fully informed and fully included in the creation of an Action Plan to address the Calls for Justice.

Despite numerous letters and meetings, none of the Coalition's concerns or requests have been meaningfully addressed. Moreover, the updates we have received indicate a largely fragmented process that does not include sufficient components of a plan, which should include concrete actions, objectives, timelines, responsibilities, and funding considerations.

The purpose of this roundtable is to fulsomely discuss the Coalition's principal requests, which are as follows, and identify immediate actions for implementation:

1. Ensure that the Coalition is a participant in the Working Groups developing the Plan, and that the Highway of Tears has direct representation
2. Improve communications by providing at a minimum substantive, timely and meaningful updates;
3. Create a Sub-Group for Indigenous women's organizations;
4. Ensure that critical groups such as women in survival sex economies and incarcerated women are represented in the Working Groups;
5. Ensure that full implementation of Bill S-3, accompanied by reparations for decades of Indian Act sex discrimination, is a key component of the National Action Plan.

The Coalition has raised legitimate concerns about the lack of inclusion, accessibility, communication, representation, and leadership regarding the National Action Plan, which we hope can be addressed swiftly. Please have your officials contact Union of BC Indian Chiefs Social Policy Analyst, Elena Pennell at epennell@ubcic.bc.ca to arrange details for this roundtable session as soon as possible.

Respectfully,



Regional Chief Terry Teegee

cc: Coalition on MMIWG2S in BC



Marcie Mezzarobba, Executive Director, Strategic Policy Initiatives, Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

