

2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People

(Ottawa) June 3, 2021—In response to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and the *Métis Perspectives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and LGBTQ2S+ People* report by Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, a National Action Plan that will drive transformative change to end systemic racism and violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Queer, Questioning, Intersex and Asexual (2SLGBTQQIA+) people was released today.

The National Action Plan was co-developed by a Core Working Group made up of contributing partners and provinces and territories, in collaboration with the National Families and Survivors Circle. The development of the National Action Plan was—and continues to be—a coordinated effort between all governments (federal, provincial, territorial, municipal, Indigenous), Indigenous representative organizations, and Indigenous partners and communities.

The National Action Plan responds to the findings of and 231 Calls for Justice from the 2019 National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and the 62 Calls for *Miskotahâ* (Michif word for change) from the Métis Perspectives report.

The 2021 National Action Plan was developed in response to the many demands to end violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. It is meant to honour and respect Indigenous and 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples' values, philosophies, knowledge systems and agencies through the prioritization of Indigenous-led solutions and services developed in partnership and sustained through the adequate resourcing of this work.

The National Action Plan is not meant to be frozen in time; it is evergreen, recognizing the urgency for immediate action, but also the importance of continuing to cultivate transformative change over time. It includes a vision and guiding principles; goals; common short-term priorities; action plans from the National Family and Survivors Circle, contributing partners, and provinces and territories; and a discussion of immediate next steps and ideas for monitoring.

Violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people happens within a broad social context shaped by systemic racism and colonialism. Therefore, change is required across all governments and institutions and by all Canadians. All involved in co-developing the National Action Plan recognize an urgent need for action.

“As family members and survivors, we bring our lived experience to guide best practices and actions to this process. It is precedent-setting to include family members and survivors in this work with partners towards ending gender- and race-based violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people,” said Hilda Anderson-Pyrz and Denise Pictou Maloney, Co-Chairs of the National Family and Survivors Circle.

“If we are to end the tragedy of gendered violence, Inuit women must be at the forefront of implementation and monitoring of the National Action Plan for Inuit. This is not a preference—it’s an imperative—consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the recommendations of the Final Report into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,” said Rebecca Kudloo, President, Pauktutit Inuit Women of Canada.

“Change must begin now to ensure the safety and security of Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people from a distinction-based perspective and a whole-of-society approach. The Métis Nation working group has laid out a trail or *Li Shmayn* forward to ensure that the tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people ends,” said Melanie Omeniho, President of Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak and Chair of the Métis Nation Working Group.

“This National Action Plan is an expression of the determination of contributing partners to overcome the systemic inequities that contribute to the high prevalence of violence experienced by many Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. I call on federal, provincial and territorial and Indigenous governments and organizations to accept all steps set out in this plan and its chapters, and to work in partnership with Inuit to bring about timely, measurable and transformative change,” said Natan Obed, President, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

“With the release of the National Action Plan, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples addresses violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and the underlining priorities our families and survivors have identified. The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) National Action Plan seeks to remedy the systemic issues that continue to violate their freedom to live where they choose and deny them their right to access the services designed to keep them safe. I sincerely appreciate the work of the CAP sub-working group in leading the creation of the National Action Plan,” said National Chief Elmer St. Pierre.

“2SLGBTQQIA+ people have always been here. Recognizing systemic violence and erasure since contact is a bold step forward. Return of 2SLGBTQQIA+ to our rightful place as peacemakers and healers in Canada will contribute to transformative healing in communities,” said Sylvia Maracle, Executive Director, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres and Chair of the 2SLGBTQQIA+ Sub-Working Group.

“Urban Indigenous people are on the frontlines and play a vital role in supporting First Nations, Inuit and Métis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. We offer strength and value-based services rooted in relationships and know what works and is needed to address violence,” said Diane Redsky, Chair of the Urban Sub-Working Group.

“Today, we see that all provinces and territories have expressed a clear commitment to take action in order to end violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. This sends a powerful message; we must work together, building on strengths while also recognizing the unique realities and approaches across the nation. Yukon has been proud to stand alongside

families, survivors and partners to support the development of the National Action Plan. We look forward to working together with our colleagues on the implementation,” said the Honourable Jeanie McLean, the Minister responsible for the Women’s Directorate, Government of Yukon.

“The ongoing human rights violations experienced by Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people demand immediate action. The Calls for Justice lay out a path forward for this. I commend all those who have done, and continue to do the hard work of developing action plans with concrete actions, objectives, timelines, roles and responsibilities, and funding commitments to implement the Calls for Justice in the short, medium, and long term, in a way that respects the unique strengths and needs of our diverse communities. Today, this work remains incomplete. The ongoing development and implementation of the National Action Plan must be characterized by increased transparency, inclusion, representation, coordination, resourcing, and political commitment. The Assembly of First Nations Women’s Council is currently engaging directly with survivors of gender-based violence and the loved ones of missing and murdered First Nations women, girls and Two-Spirit people to develop a First Nations specific action plan to end violence and will make our contribution to the National Action Plan once this work is complete,” said Assembly of First Nations Women’s Council member Louisa Housty-Jones.

“Violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in Canada is an ongoing national tragedy that needs to end. On behalf of the Government of Canada, I would like to thank the families, survivors and all partners, including over 100 Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, who worked together to develop this National Action Plan. Together, we will achieve the transformational change needed to end this violence,” said the Honourable Carolyn Bennett, M.D., P.C., M.P., Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations.

National Action Plan: www.MMIWG2Splus-nationalactionplan.ca

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