

Media Release

November 16th, 2010

The National Council of Women of Canada (the “NCWC”) urges the Government of Canada to engage in open and meaningful dialogue with the Native Women's Association of Canada (the “NWAC”) and continue to fund their *Sisters In Spirit* initiative for research, policy, and advocacy.

Canada has said it has maintained a consistent and principled position by not signing and ratifying the *United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (the “Declaration”) due to significant concerns with the wording of provisions of the Declaration. Canada is now reconsidering its position with its endorsement of the Declaration on Friday November 12, 2010. In doing so, the Government of Canada is demonstrating a commitment to foster open dialogue towards improving the lives of Aboriginal people throughout Canada.

In 2008, the United Nations' Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) criticized Canada's compliance with the *United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* and asked Canada to report back on steps taken to address inadequate social assistance rates across the country and the failure of law enforcement agencies to deal with the disappearance and murder of Aboriginal women and girls. In its critical review, CEDAW recommended that Canada develop a specific and integrated plan for addressing the particular conditions affecting Aboriginal women, both on and off reserves, including poverty, poor health, inadequate housing low school-completion rates, low employment rates, low income and high rates of violence.

NCWC urges the Government of Canada to collaborate with NWAC in reporting back to the United Nations on CEDAW's recommendations. NCWC further urges the Government of Canada to develop, fund, and implement an integrated plan to address the systemic conditions affecting Aboriginal women.

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Mary Scott, President

ncwc@magma.ca

<http://www.ncwc.ca>

The National Council of Women of Canada is a federation composed of Local Councils, Provincial Councils, and National Organizations. Founded in 1893, it was incorporated by an Act of Parliament in 1914 and has been designated by the Government of Canada as being of national historic significance for its role in Canadian women's history. For more information, consult our web site at www.ncwc.ca