
STATEMENT

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Ministry of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

Statement on 2016 national roundtable

VICTORIA – Attorney General and Minister of Justice Suzanne Anton and Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation John Rustad marked the conclusion of the 2016 National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls with the following statement:

“Ensuring the safety of Indigenous women and girls is one of the defining issues of our time. Families in our province and across the country have been deeply affected by the loss of loved ones. A key component of the 2016 National Roundtable was to hear and share what families are telling us and examine the actions we are taking to prevent, respond to and support healing from violence against Indigenous women and girls.

“Families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls have shared with us powerful stories of their experiences and their recommendations for ending violence and achieving justice. Much of what we heard at the B.C. Family Gathering in Prince George was echoed in discussions here in Winnipeg, where we listened to what family members and Indigenous leaders told us about their grief, their concerns and their hopes for the future.

“We heard about racism and how the portrayal of Indigenous people in the media perpetuates stereotypes and violence. We heard about the need for education about the history of Indigenous people in British Columbia and across our country. We heard about the need to focus on respect of Indigenous people.

“The Government of British Columbia is taking action on what we have heard from grieving Aboriginal families in our province. It is why we are targeting anti-violence funding toward Aboriginal communities. In the past year, we provided \$1 million in Civil Forfeiture Grant funding to support Aboriginal communities in their anti-violence initiatives, \$2.5 million in ongoing annual funding for services and supports to victims of crime and women who have experienced violence in Northern British Columbia, and \$1.5 million for anti-domestic violence programs selected by Aboriginal agency partners. We are committed to taking this kind of partnered approach to identify and implement future actions in our journey toward reconciliation. We will strive to improve cultural competency and safety within and across our government. We will work with Aboriginal leaders and the federal government to ensure that the National Inquiry builds on these actions.

“Across Canada momentum is building. The topic of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls is increasingly getting the attention and leadership it deserves. Each province and territory, as well as the federal government, is pursuing projects and measurable initiatives that will make real progress to resolve this crisis. In British Columbia, we are committed to achieving generational change with solutions to an unacceptable situation that affects us all.”

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