



## **Indigenous Women, Allies and International Human Rights Experts Gather to Strategize National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA), and the Canadian Journal of Women in Law (CJWL) will host a symposium on murders and disappearances of Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) and the forthcoming national inquiry on January 30 and 31, 2016 at the University of Ottawa.

This symposium will provide an opportunity for Indigenous women, international human rights experts and allies to strategize on how to move forward now that the Government of Canada has officially confirmed that it will establish a national inquiry. Dialogue will centre on designing an inclusive, productive framework for the inquiry, and on developing a co-ordinated action plan to end violence against Indigenous women.

The symposium will host experts from the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), and three United Nations Special Rapporteurs — making this an unprecedented meeting on Canada's human rights crisis and on the rights of Indigenous women and girls.

### **WHAT: Symposium on Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**

#### **WHEN:**

- Symposium day 1 (by invitation) January 30 at 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. EST
- Reception for symposium day 1 (by invitation) January 30 at 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. EST
- Symposium day 2 (by invitation) January 31 at 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. EST

#### **International human rights experts participating in symposium include:**

- James Cavallaro, Vice-President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
- Barbara Bailey, Member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and Member of the Canada Inquiry team
- Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and Chair of the Working Group on Follow-Up to Inquiries

- Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Dubravka Šimonović, United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women
- Leilani Farha, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing

**Canadian experts participating in symposium include:**

- Dawn Lavell-Harvard, President, Native Women's Association of Canada
- Sharon McIvor, Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action
- Nahanni Fontaine, Special Advisor on Aboriginal Women's Issues for the Province of Manitoba
- Pam Palmater, Centre for Indigenous Governance, Ryerson University
- Tracy Lindberg, Director, Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge and Research, Athabaska University
- Fay Blaney, February 14th Women's Memorial March, Downtown Eastside
- Nathalie DesRosiers, Dean Faculty of Law (Common Law Section) University of Ottawa
- Shelagh Day, Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action

**PRESS CONFERENCE:**

January 31 at 12:00 p.m.

University of Ottawa – 3rd floor of Desmarais Building in room DMS 3105

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**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

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