
(Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver, B.C. – November 9, 2015) A Coalition on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls is holding a press conference this morning to advise the public that British Columbia has failed to make significant progress on many of the recommendations from the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry (MWCI) and continues to ignore international recommendations from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). Given their experience with the MWCI, the Coalition is making preliminary recommendations to the newly elected Trudeau Government for the National Inquiry which Prime Minister Trudeau promised would start immediately.

For decades, Indigenous women and supporting organizations called for an inquiry into the disappearances of the many marginalized women from BC. Unfortunately, the MWCI led by Wally Oppal in 2012 was a deeply and systemically flawed and frustrating process that repeated the same discrimination and exclusion which we hoped it was going to uncover.

Of the 56 MWCI recommendations aimed at BC, many are unimplemented or “in progress,” and there is no ongoing accountability from the Province on work that remains to be done. To the contrary, the Province publicly said in 2014 that they would no longer be providing any updates on the recommendations, and BC Minister of Justice Suzanne Anton advised the Coalition on May 4, 2015, that “no further action is being contemplated.” Minister Anton continues to ignore our requests for full implementation of both MWCI and IACHR recommendations, and for a genuine accountability process to oversee and evaluate change and progress.
One of the critical and outstanding recommendations from the MWCI, the Highway of Tears Symposium, and the IACHR is to create accessible transportation along the Highway of Tears (Highway 16) in Northern BC. The Coalition is absolutely appalled that the Privacy Commissioner of BC recently confirmed that the BC Government deleted emails from family and communities about the Highway of Tears instead of responding appropriately to a freedom of information request, and instead of responding to the repeated and important recommendations to address this issue.

We request that the Province review Highway of Tears transportation options with affected communities and jointly create a fully funded plan that will be announced prior to the Gathering for Family Members of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls planned for March 2016 in Prince George. We strongly emphasize the need to address the systemic issues of poverty, racism, and the inter-generational impacts of Residential Schools, leading to the alarmingly high rate of murdered and disappeared women along the Highway of Tears. We also ask the Province to provide ongoing funding for the Highway of Tears Initiative.

Importantly, the Coalition is drawing on the respective and collective experience of its member organizations and individuals to recommend that the National Inquiry promised by the newly elected Trudeau government begin by establishing a pre-inquiry consultation process. Such a process should be inclusive of Indigenous women and communities and related organizations, and should establish the mandate and parameters of the inquiry, criteria for appointments of Commissioners and staff, processes for participation, initial areas of research, and resource requirements and commitments. It will be critical to review different models of inquiries. Further, the National Inquiry must consult thoroughly at every stage with Indigenous women and communities and related organizations, a recommendation made by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in its January 2015 report after reviewing the MWCI.

We are completely resolute that the National Inquiry cannot in any way repeat the mistakes of the BC Missing Women Commission of Inquiry. Importantly, any recommendations coming out of a National Inquiry must be accompanied by a fully funded implementation plan, which was absent from both the MWCI and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. We are calling on the Trudeau Government to fulfil its commitment to a National Inquiry by establishing a genuine and transparent pre-inquiry consultation so that the National Inquiry truly results in improving the safety of Indigenous women and girls, and achieves justice for those who have been murdered or disappeared.

*The Coalition on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls initially came together in response to the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry in British Columbia overseen by Commissioner Wally Oppal. Unfortunately the groups who formed the Coalition were shut out of the inquiry; however, the Coalition continues to meet regularly to pursue justice for murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls and has grown in number and strength.*

**Background documents:**

1. Summary of MWCI Recommendations and Implementation, compiled by the Coalition (Nov 5, 2015)

2. Coalition correspondence to Prime Minister Trudeau, Minister Wilson-Raybould, Minister Bennett, and Minister Hajdu regarding recommendations for National Inquiry (Nov 9, 2015)
For further information:

Amnesty International Canada, Craig Benjamin, (613) 744-7667, ext. 235
Atira Housing, Janice Abbott, (604) 331-1420
Battered Women’s Support Services, Angela Marie MacDougall, (604) 808-0507
BC Assembly of First Nations, Regional Chief Shane Gottfriedson, (250) 318-8527
BC Civil Liberties Association, Josh Paterson, (778) 829-8973
Butterflies in Spirit, Lorelei Williams, (778) 709-6498
Carrier Sekani Family Services, Mary Teegee, (250) 612-8710
Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, Tribal Chief Terry Teegee, (250) 640-3256
Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre, Alice Kendall, (604) 681-8480
Ending Violence Association of BC, Christina Entrekin Coad, (604) 633-2506, ext. 13
February 14th Women’s Memorial March Committee, Fay Blaney, (778) 714-0161
First Nations Summit, Colin Braker, (604) 328-4094
First United Church, Genesa Greening, (604) 681-8365
Lookout Emergency Aid Society, Shayne Williams, (604) 255-0340
Native Women’s Association of Canada
Neskonlith Indian Band, Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, (250) 319-7383
PACE: Providing Alternatives Counselling & Education Society, Laura Dilley, (604) 872-7651
PHS Community Services Society, Patrick Smith, (604) 779-6837
Pivot Legal Society, Kevin Hollett, (778) 848-3420
Poverty and Human Rights Centre, Shelagh Day, (604) 872-0750
RainCity Housing, Amelia Ridgway, (604) 662-7023
Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, (250) 490-5314
Vancouver Council of Women, Rosemary Mallory, (604) 985-0878
Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre Society, Lillian Howard, (604) 253-9575
Vancouver Rape Relief and Women’s Shelter, Keira Smith-Tague, (604) 872-8212
Union Gospel Mission, Derek Weiss, (604) 253-3323
West Coast LEAF, Kendra Milne, (604) 684-8772
WISH Drop-in Centre Society, Mebrat Beyene, (604) 669-9474
Women Against Violence Against Women, Irene Tsepnopoulous-Elhaimer, (604) 255-6228 ext 229
Ceejai Julien, family member, (778)251-0727
Beverley Jacobs, Jacobs Law, (778) 877-7402
Summary of MWCI Recommendations & Implementation  
Compiled by the Coalition on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

Sources of Information:

Forsaken (report of the MCWI), Executive Summary, November 2012  
http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/public_inquiries/docs/Forsaken-ES.pdf

VPD Administrative Report, January 2013 (Doug Lepard)  

Safety and Security of Vulnerable Women in BC (BC response to MWCI recommendations), March 2014  


Main entities targeted by recommendations:

- Province
- Attorney General/Crown Prosecution Services
- Police forces

Main themes:

- Healing and reconciliation, including specifically for families
- Changes to policing to increase sensitivity to and protection for vulnerable women (for example, training)
- Changes to investigations, how charges are laid, and how victims are supported
- Changes to missing persons policing
- Changes to coordination between police forces

Comments:

It is difficult to assess with any accuracy how far the Province’s actions go in responding to the MWCI recommendations. Forsaken recommended appointing an independent champion to steward the process of change after the MWCI closed. With the resignation of the Honourable Steven Point, there has been no one to fulfill this crucial oversight role. Many projects are described by the Province as “ongoing” or “in progress,” but with no further report from the Province anticipated, there is no accountability mechanism to measure the success of their implementation.

At least some of the achievements reported on by the Province as satisfying the MWCI recommendations are actually the work of other programs, some of them predating the MWCI.

Of the projects that have been undertaken directly in response to MWCI, some are clearly not in keeping with the spirit of the original recommendations. As an example, a number of the recommendations concerned
cultural competency training for police and service providers, conducted by experiential people and members of Indigenous communities, as a means of building understanding between police and community members. The Province has responded to this by extending the use of an online tool, originally developed for health care providers, for use by others. This is not a satisfactory response to the communities that are owed bias-free policing. Not surprisingly, members of these communities complain that little has changed in their relations with police forces.

The Provinces’ response to Urgent Measure #2 concerning Highway of Tears deserves special mention. While the Province has claimed that its work there is ongoing, that “work” has amounted to the creation of a website and a small grant for driver’s education training. In the meantime, not only is there no evidence of progress on an improved transportation system on Highway 16, critical emails about consultations with communities have been destroyed.

These responses are unacceptable and reinforce the conviction that the Province is not truly committed to work to ensure the safety and uphold the dignity of Indigenous women and girls.
Note: The VPD expressed its support for the vast majority of recommendations directed specifically at police; however, in many cases, it is not clear whether these recommendations have been actively implemented.

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<th>Recommendations</th>
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<td>1) To provide funding to existing centres that provide emergency services to</td>
<td>An “urgent measure,” not a formal recommendation</td>
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| women engaged in the sex trade to enable them to remain open 24 hours per day.  | PEERS Vancouver closed during the Commission of Inquiry because of lack of funding.  
|                                                                                 | WISH got new funding ($750,000 via BC Housing) to extend its hours of operation.  
|                                                                                 | The Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre received an annual funding increase of $400,000.  
<p>|                                                                                 | PACE, the Warm Zone, New Hope, and PEERS Victoria received $450,000 in one-time funding.                                                                                                                                  |
| 2) To develop and implement an enhanced public transit system to provide a       | An “urgent measure,” not a formal recommendation                                                                                                                                                                           |
| safer travel option connecting the Northern communities, particularly along     | NOT DONE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Highway 16.                                                                     | It was revealed by a whistle-blower that staff working for Transportation Minister Todd Stone had deleted emails about the Province’s response to the Highway of Tears transportation issues in November 2014. The deleted emails were the subject of a report by BC Privacy Commissioner Elizabeth Denham released in October 2015. The Province has created a website (gov.bc.ca/Highway16) on transit options in the area and expanded cell phone service, but no additional transportation is available. Carrier Sekani Family Services received $300,000 for safety workshops and $75,000 as one-time funding for driver education. |
| 3.1 That Provincial Government appoint two advisors, including one Aboriginal    | The Honourable Steven Point was appointed but resigned, ostensibly when the children of the murdered women launched a lawsuit against the Province. That suit has now settled. No one was ever appointed to Mr. Point. The Province has said that it considers his work done. |
| Elder, to consult with all affected parties regarding the form and content of    | A lawsuit against the Province was filed by 13 children of murdered and missing women seeking damages for losses associated with their deaths. The fund was announced at the same time as the settlement between the children and the Province. |
| the apologies and other forms of public acknowledgement required as a first step  | Province provided a total of $4.9 million (calculated on the basis of $50,000 per child) for the children of                                                                                                                  |
| in the healing and reconciliation process.                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |</p>
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<td>3.3 That Provincial Government establish a healing fund for families of the missing and murdered women. These funds should be accessed through an application process pursuant to established guidelines.</td>
<td>Funds have been disbursed to Sisters in Spirit Fort St. John for a healing camp for families. The Province’s efforts to hold healing meetings with families tentatively scheduled for spring 2016 may be a response to this recommendation. The Province also indicates that this work continues through MACAW (the Ministry’s Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women), including through the “Giving Voice” initiative; however, it is unclear to what is being done.</td>
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<td>3.4 That Provincial Government appoint two advisors, including one Aboriginal Elder, to consult with all affected parties regarding the structure and format of this facilitated reconciliation process and to consider mechanisms for funding it. These consultations and recommendations could be undertaken together with recommendation 3.1.</td>
<td>Province probably believes it discharged this duty when it appointed the Honourable Steven Point. As above, the Province’s efforts to hold healing meetings with the families are probably a response to this recommendation.</td>
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<td>4.1 That the Minister of Justice direct the Director of Police Services to undertake equality audits of police forces in British Columbia with a focus on police duty to protect marginalized and Aboriginal women from violence. These audits should be carried out by an external agency and with meaningful community involvement.</td>
<td>VPD says it supports this recommendation. The Province has said that an examination of policies and practices of police agencies has been initiated. There is no indication when it will be completed or whether the results will be made public. On April 9, 2014, the Police Act was amended to allow for additional standards to support bias-free policing and audits for unsolved major investigations; the practical implications of this change are unknown.</td>
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<td>4.2 That Provincial Government set a provincial standard establishing that police officers have a general and binding duty to promote equality and to refrain from discriminatory policing.</td>
<td>The VPD says it will review existing relevant documents to improve the language. The Province reports that interagency standards are being developed through a collaborative efforts that includes the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and BC Civil Liberties Association.</td>
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<td>4.3 That Provincial Government amend the BC Crown Policy Manual to explicitly include equality as a fundamental principle to guide Crown Counsel in performing their functions.</td>
<td>Changes to Crown policy manual: Province claims these actions are ongoing. Changes were not included in the most recent updates to the Manual – last revised July 23, 2015. White Paper on Justice Reform from February 2013 refers to the MWCI recommendations and expresses intention to act, but they do not appear to have been implemented.</td>
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This policy does not seem to have been developed. |
<p>| Assault Policy to provide guidance on the prosecution of crimes of violence    |                                                                                                                                                    |
| against vulnerable women, including women engaged in the sex trade.           |                                                                                                                                                    |
| 4.5 That Provincial Government adopt a policy statement in the BC Crown       | This is not included in the most recent version of the Manual.                                                                                       |
| Policy Manual requiring that a prosecutor’s evaluations of how strong the    |                                                                                                                                                    |
| case is likely to be when presented at trial should be made on the           |                                                                                                                                                    |
| assumption that the trier of fact will act impartially and according to the  |                                                                                                                                                    |
| law.                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                    |
| 4.6 That Provincial Government direct the Director of Police Services to     | VPD says the duty to warn has evolved already, but it supports codifying this duty.                                                                 |
| consult with the BC Association of Municipal Chiefs of Police, the RCMP and   |                                                                                                                                                    |
| community representatives to recommend the wording of a statutory provision  |                                                                                                                                                    |
| on the legal duty to warn and a protocol on how it should be interpreted and |
| applied.                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                    |
| 4.7 That police forces work with local communities to develop communication  | VPD says it now routinely does this.                                                                                                               |
| strategies for the issuance of warnings that ensure the message is           |                                                                                                                                                    |
| conveyed to community members who are most at risk of the specific threat.   |                                                                                                                                                    |
| 4.8 That Provincial Government fund three law reform research projects on    | Section in Crown Policy Manual on Vulnerable Victims and Witnesses Adult (last updated July 23, 2015) provides very general guidelines for supporting |
| aspects of the treatment of vulnerable and intimidated witnesses:             | victims and witnesses who have substance dependency and/or who are engaged in sex work. No additions made to address substance use and memory,    |
| • The effects of drug and alcohol use on memory and how to support those    | justice system bias, credibility assessments, or the law of evidence in general.                                                                 |
| experiencing dependency or addiction to provide testimony;                   | Section says that “individuals engaged in prostitution may be particularly vulnerable due to a climate of violence, exploitation and degradation.”  |
| • Police, counsel and the judiciary’s bias and perceptions of credibility  |                                                                                                                                                    |
| of people with drug additions or who are engaged in the survival sex trade;  | Guidelines on serving witnesses with subpoenas and allowing them accommodations provided for in the Criminal Code do not appear to be new additions. |
| and • Potential changes to the law of evidence to better allow vulnerable   |                                                                                                                                                    |
| witnesses, including those who have been sexually assaulted, those suffering |                                                                                                                                                    |
| from addictions, and those in the sex industry, to take part in court       |                                                                                                                                                    |
| processes.                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                    |</p>
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<td>4.9 That Provincial Government develop guidelines to facilitate and support vulnerable and intimidated witnesses by all actors within the criminal justice system based on the best practices identified by the Commission through its review of protocols and guidelines existing in other jurisdictions.</td>
<td>Only very general guidelines exist. They include improving communication with vulnerable victims and witnesses, giving them timely information, expediting the process when appropriate, informing them of available supports, and ensuring that applications are made for protection orders, publication bans, and testimonial accommodations.</td>
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<td>4.10 That police forces integrate into training, performance standards, and performance measurement the ability of police officers to develop and maintain community relationships, particularly with vulnerable members of the community who are often at risk of being treated unequally in the delivery of public services.</td>
<td>Police forces were to improve communication and interaction with vulnerable communities and deliver bias-free policing. An existing online module for “cultural competency” created by the Provincial Health Services Authority has been adapted for use by police and other service providers and extended throughout the province. The Police Academy of the Justice Institute of British Columbia received a $205,000 grant through the Civil Forfeiture Office to facilitate the integration of cultural competency and bias-free policing core values throughout the curricula. The Province’s December 2014 report notes that work was underway on this project.</td>
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<td>4.11 That the BC Association of Municipal Chiefs of Police and the RCMP establish a working group to develop a best practices guide for the establishment and implementation of formal discussion mechanisms to facilitate communication and collaboration that transcends the institutional hierarchy within a police agency.</td>
<td>The BC Association of Chiefs of Police Advisory Committee, Policing and Security Branch, conducted a review of the MWCI recommendations and a report was underway as of December 2014.</td>
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<td>4.12 That police officers be required to undergo mandatory and ongoing experiential and interactive training concerning vulnerable community members:  • Active engagement in overcoming biases, rather than more passive sensitivity training (sometimes called anti-oppression training);  • More intensive and ongoing training in the history and current status of Aboriginal peoples in the province and in the specific community, particularly with respect to the ongoing effects of residential schools and the child welfare system;  • Training and resources to make prevention of violence against Aboriginal women a genuine priority;  • Training to ensure an understanding of violence against women in a range of settings including family violence, child sexual exploitation and violence against As noted above (see 4.10), the training done to date consists mostly of an online module, not “experiential and interactive training” as recommended here.</td>
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<td>4.13 That the Police Complaint Commissioner, working with police forces across the Province, take steps to develop, promote and refine informal methods of police discipline, particularly in marginalized communities such as the DTES and with Aboriginal communities.</td>
<td>The IIO continues to oversee investigations. Bill C-42, the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP, received royal assent on June 19, 2013.</td>
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<td>4.14 That Provincial Government engage with the RCMP in order to bring them into the provincial complaints process.</td>
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<td>5.1 That SisterWatch be evaluated to provide a basis for further refinements and with a view to establishing best practices for meaningful police-community partnerships; and that these best practices be shared with other police forces to encourage them to develop and maintain ongoing, collaborative community forums.</td>
<td>Funding has been disbursed to the VPD for evaluation of Sister Watch. The progress of the evaluation is not known.</td>
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<td>5.2 That all entities with proposed responsibilities under the Living in Community Action Plan commit to these priority actions that together form a strong basis for enhancing the safety of women engaged in the survival sex trade.</td>
<td>LIC continues to be supported in its work and received one time funding to provide outreach and support to northern communities. Two Social Planner positions were created at the City of Vancouver to liaise with communities and community groups on sex work issues, one to address indoor environments and the other to address street based sex work. No additional police officer liaison positions have been funded at the VPD. According to the VPD, Aboriginal Liaison Officers already exist, one focused on youth and one for Musqueam. The VPD will study how to best implement this recommendation. The VPD says the Vancouver Aboriginal Community Police Centre has fulfilled the VPNLS function since prior to the MWCI.</td>
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<td>5.3 That other communities be encouraged to undertake the type of collaborative community engagement strategy employed by Living in Community to develop an integrated strategy for enhancing the safety of women engaged in the survival sex trade.</td>
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<td>5.4 That Provincial Government fund additional full-time Sex Trade Liaison Officer positions in the Lower Mainland.</td>
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<td>5.5 That the City of Vancouver create and fund two community-based liaison positions to be filled by individuals who have experience in the survival sex trade.</td>
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<td>5.6 That Provincial Government undertake a community consultation, needs assessment and</td>
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<td>women in the sex trade; in particular, the scenarios used in police training should incorporate issues of cultural sensitivity and violence against women; and</td>
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<td>• Training in recognizing the special needs of vulnerable individuals and how to meet those needs, including recognition of a higher standard of care owed by the police to these individuals.</td>
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<td>5.1</td>
<td>That the VPD establish a position of Aboriginal Liaison Officer whose responsibilities would include assisting Aboriginal persons in their interactions with the Missing Persons Unit.</td>
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<td>5.2</td>
<td>That all police forces in British Columbia consider developing and implementing guidelines on the model of the Vancouver Police Department’s Sex Work Enforcement Guidelines in consultation with women engaged in the sex trade in their jurisdiction.</td>
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| 5.3 | That the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Police Department take proactive measures to reduce the number of court warrants issued for minor offences by:  
  - Reducing the number of tickets issued and charges laid for minor offences;  
  - Developing guidelines to facilitate greater and more consistent use of police discretion not to lay charges; and  
  - Increasing the ways in which failures to appear can be quashed early in the judicial process. |
| 5.4 | That courts consider making increased use of diversionary or alternative measures to deal with bench warrants and breaches of conditions. This is in light of the barriers that outstanding warrants have on the ability of vulnerable women who are victims of violent crime to access police services. And that proactive steps be taken to assist women to clear outstanding warrants. |
| 5.5 | That the Minister of Justice consult with the judiciary, police and community representatives to develop a protocol providing the police with the discretion not to enforce a warrant in a circumstance where a sex trade worker is attempting to report a violent crime. |
| 5.6 | That the Minister of Justice establish a working group to develop options for enhanced legislative protection for exploited women. The working group should include representatives of sex workers, community-based organizations providing support to and advocacy for women engaged in the sex trade, ACOPPS (the Advisory Committee on Provincial Policing standards) has created Provincial Policing Standards on Missing Persons Investigations (http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/policing-in-bc/policing-standards), which will come into effect in September 2016. |
Aboriginal women’s organizations, police agencies and the Crown Counsel Association.

5.13 That the BC Association of Municipal Police Chiefs and the RCMP, with support from the Director of Police Services, should develop a protocol containing additional measures to monitor high-risk offenders, including recommendations for the efficient and timely sharing of information.

6.1 That Provincial Government fully support the implementation of the Highway of Tears Symposium action plan, updated to the current situation and in a manner that ensures involvement of all affected communities along Highway 16.

6.2 That Provincial Government fund a community consultation process led by Aboriginal organizations to develop and implement a pilot project designed to ensure the safety of vulnerable Aboriginal youth during the rural-urban transition.

6.3 That Provincial Government provide additional funding to Aboriginal women’s organizations to create programs addressing violence on reserves, so that fewer women and youth are forced to escape to urban areas.

6.4 That Provincial Government provide additional funding to Aboriginal women’s organizations to provide more safe houses and counselling programs run for and by Aboriginal women and youth.

6.5 That Provincial Government fund a collaborative action research project on the entry of young women into the sex trade, especially Aboriginal women who are often homeless during the transition from reserves or foster homes to urban centres, and to develop an action plan to facilitate and support exiting the survival sex trade.

As noted above, the Province has not implemented the Highway of Tears Symposium action plan or otherwise acted to improve the transportation on Highway 16.

The Province states that it has made grants totalling $110,000 to Aboriginal organizations and to the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres for programs on sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

The Province also states that funds have been transferred to organizations including small businesses working in partnership in the Lower Mainland to deliver training programs aimed at 13 to 18 year olds, however, no details of these programs have been provided.

The Province notes in its December 2014 report that it purchased the Astoria Hotel in Prince George to be used as a shelter, however, this occurred prior to the MWCI.

7.1 That the provincial standards be developed by the Director of Police Services with the assistance of a committee consisting of representatives of the BC Association of Municipal Police Chiefs, the RCMP, representatives of community and Aboriginal groups, and representatives of families of the missing and murdered women.

As noted above, ACOPPS has developed Provincial Policing Standards.

There is a BC Police Missing Persons Centre.

At the federal government level (and thus independent of the MWCI and its recommendations) the National Centre for Missing Persons and
7.2 That proposed provincial missing persons standards include at least 15 components:
- Definition of “missing person;”
- Criteria for the acceptance of reports;
- Jurisdiction;
- Missing Person Risk Assessment Tool;
- Provincial Missing Person Reporting Form;
- Standards related to interaction with family/reportees;
- Initial steps – background information;
- Supervisory responsibility/quality control;
- Forensic evidence standards;
- Coroners’ Liaison;
- Monitoring outstanding missing person cases;
- Automatic annual review of unsolved cases;
- Closing missing person files;
- Prevention and intervention; and
- The role and authority of the BCPMPC.

7.3 That the provincial standards require a proactive missing persons process whereby police must take prevention and intervention measures including “safe and well” checks when an individual is found.

7.4 That best practice protocols be established for (1) enhanced victimology analysis of missing persons, (2) investigative steps in missing person cases, (3) collaborative missing person investigations collection, (4) storage and analysis of missing persons data, and (5) training specific to missing person investigations.

7.5 That Provincial Government establish a provincial partnership committee on missing persons to facilitate the collaboration of key players in the ongoing development of best practice protocols for missing person cases. The committee should be chaired by a senior government official and include representatives of the missing and murdered women’s families, Aboriginal organizations, community groups, service providers, police, and Victim Services.

7.6 That Provincial Government establish an agency independent of all police agencies with the purposes to include co-ordinating information, identifying patterns, establishing base rates, checking on police investigations, ensuring accountability for linked interjurisdictional series, and warning the public. Unidentified Remains has created a national website of missing persons cases: canadasmissing.ca.
should provide oversight and analytic functions, but it should not be an investigating entity.

7.7 That provincial authorities create and maintain a provincial missing person website aimed at educating the public about the missing persons process and engaging them in proactive approaches to prevention and investigation.

7.8 That provincial authorities establish a provincial 1-800 phone number for the taking of missing person reports and accessing case information.

7.9 That provincial authorities develop an enhanced, holistic, comprehensive approach for the provision of support to the families and friends of missing persons. This should be based on a needs assessment carried out in consultation with the provincial partnership committee on missing persons.

7.10 That representatives of the media be invited to be members of the provincial partnership committee and that the committee should develop a protocol on issues related to the role of the media in missing person investigations.

7.11 That the provincial partnership committee develop a proposal for either an enhanced BCPMPC to meet additional responsibilities relating to the needs of members of the public and, in particular, reportees; or to create an independent civilian-based agency for this purpose.

8.1 That Provincial Government enact missing persons legislation to grant speedy access to personal information of missing persons without unduly infringing on privacy rights. I recommend the adoption of single purpose legislation, as in Alberta and Manitoba, with a provision for a comprehensive review of the operation of the Act after five years.


8.2 That Provincial Government mandate the use of Major Case Management (MCM) for major crimes and that the Director of Police Services develop these MCM standards in consultation with the police community and through a review of best practices in other jurisdictions.

The Province refers to this as part of other initiatives on standards development, but provides no particulars.

8.3 That the Director of Police Services mandate
accountability under the MCM standards by requiring that police forces:

- Provide an explanation as to why MCM was not used for a “major crime” in an annual report to the Director of Police Services;
- Notify the Director of Police Services of all “major crime” investigations that are not under active investigation and have remained open for more than one year. Upon receipt of such notification, the Director will appoint another police department to conduct an independent audit of the prior investigation and conduct such additional investigatory steps as it deems necessary, and report its finding to the Director and the originating police agency; and
- Conduct annual internal audits of a statistically valid random selection of MCM investigations to ensure proper compliance with the model.

8.4 That issues related to a single electronic MCM system for British Columbia, as well as compatibility with cross-Canada systems, be reviewed as part of the consultation on MCM standards set out above.

8.5 That Provincial Government take active steps to support the development of a National DNA Missing Persons Index and to assist in overcoming the impasse on outstanding concerns over its creation and operationalization.

9.1 That Provincial Government commit to establishing a Greater Vancouver police force through a consultative process with all stakeholders.

9.2 That Provincial Government establish an independent expert committee to develop a proposed model and implementation plan for a Greater Vancouver police force.

An Expert Committee has been established to examine how policing is structured and funded and to explore regional delivery of specialized services. Reportedly provisions in the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2014, introduced to the Legislature October 23, 2014, would also clarify government authority to expand integrated policing.

10.1 That the Director of Police Services mandate provincial standards for multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency investigations to be incorporated into the provincial MCM standards referred to in recommendation 8.2.

10.2 That the Director of Police Services consult with the BC Association of Police Chiefs and the RCMP to create a protocol or framework for multi-jurisdictional major case investigations to ensure the timely and seamless implementation of multi-agency teams, including a provision for an independent panel to

Activities relating to provincial policing standards are referred to above.
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<tr>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>That Provincial Government commit to moving expeditiously to implement a regional Real Time Crime Centre.</td>
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A Real Time Crime Centre was developed by the RCMP with municipal police partners.

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<tr>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>That the accountability structure for the Greater Vancouver police force incorporate a holistic approach that provides oversight on both an individual and systemic level and is fully responsive and responsible to the communities it serves.</td>
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Police board structure, function, selection practices and training are reportedly under review. It is not clear if any changes have been made.

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<tr>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>That the Police Act be amended to provide that the Mayor is an <em>ex officio</em> member of the Board, but has no voting authority.</td>
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<td>11.3</td>
<td>That additional steps need to be taken to ensure representation of vulnerable and marginalized members and Aboriginal peoples on police boards.</td>
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<td>11.4</td>
<td>That police boards have access to greater resources from the Division of Police Services to gather and analyze information to enable them to better carry out their oversight functions.</td>
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Police board structure, function, selection practices and training are reportedly under review. It is not clear if any changes have been made.

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<td>12.1</td>
<td>That Provincial Government appoint an independent advisor to serve as a champion for the implementation of the Commission’s recommendations. This appointment should take effect within 12 weeks of release of the report.</td>
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See above regarding the resignation of the Honourable Steven Point, who was appointed to be champion of the recommendation implementation process. The Province has said that it considers Mr. Point’s work done.

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<tr>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>That the independent advisor work collaboratively with representatives of Aboriginal communities, the DTES, and the victims’ families in the implementation process.</td>
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</table>
November 9, 2015

Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada, P.C., M.P.  
Langevin Block 80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3  
Via facsimile: 613-941-6900  
Via email: pm@pm.gc.ca

Honourable Carolyn Bennett  
Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, P.C., M.P.  
10 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H4  
Via facsimile: 819-953-4941  
Via email: carolyn.bennett@parl.gc.ca

Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, P.C., M.P.  
284 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H8  
Via facsimile: 613-954-0811  
Via email: mcu@justice.gc.ca

Honourable Patricia Hajdu  
Minister for the Status of Women, P.C., M.P.  
P.O. Box 8097, Station T CSC  
Ottawa, ON, K1G 3H6  
Via facsimile: 819-420-6906  
Via email: minister-ministre@swc-cfc.gc.ca

RE: Coalition on MMIWG Recommendations for National Inquiry

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Ministers:

We extend our sincere congratulations on your election and appointments to a new Cabinet. We thank you for your campaign commitments to advance justice and equality and to set a new relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples. We write today about your promise to establish a national public inquiry on murders and disappearances of Indigenous women and girls, which is a crucial step towards creating a just society for Indigenous women and girls, their families and communities.
The Coalition on Missing and Murdered Women formed when the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry was appointed in British Columbia in 2010, although many of the members of the Coalition, such as the February 14th Memorial March, have been working to bring public attention to the murders and disappearances of Indigenous women and girls for more than 25 years. The Coalition is comprised of front-line women’s organizations, Indigenous organizations and human rights organizations, which all have established expertise and experience working with Indigenous women and their families on the issues surrounding the crisis of violence against Indigenous women and girls.

We write today with a specific request with respect to the implementation of your commitment to a national inquiry: a pre-inquiry consultation process must be established in order to ensure that the inquiry is designed, in advance, in a way that will allow it to successfully meet its goals and improve safety for Indigenous women and girls in Canada. In particular, this pre-inquiry consultation process should establish the mandate and parameters of the inquiry, criteria for appointments of Commissioners and staff, processes for participation, initial areas of research, and resource requirements and commitments.

We stress the importance of pre-inquiry consultation because we have learned from the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry in BC, which was a dismal failure. The mandate of the BC inquiry was too narrow to address the root causes of the problem before it. In addition, the BC inquiry process effectively excluded key organizations, such as the Native Women’s Association of Canada, who could speak to the lives and deaths of the women it was ostensibly designed to consider, as well as Indigenous and civil society organizations with crucial expertise about the root causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls and its real effects on families and communities. The families of the women who were murdered by Robert William Pickton received only token representation and support, and many families felt left out of any meaningful participation in the process.

The failure of the BC inquiry and the necessity for meaningful pre-inquiry planning are well established. Some members of the Coalition wrote a report after this dismaying experience, entitled Blueprint for an Inquiry: Learning from the Failures of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry,1 which sets out a number of necessary considerations for future inquiries and states:

If there were only one recommendation to come from this report, it would be that commissions of inquiry that …are called in response to the concerns of marginalized communities, must consult thoroughly at every stage with those communities and the organizations that work with those communities.

In addition, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights issued a report in January 2015 entitled Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in British Columbia, Canada,2 which reviewed the work of BC’s Missing Women Commission of Inquiry. The report stressed the importance of consulting with Indigenous women and communities, noting “[t]heir consultation is crucial for the success of any initiative, especially given the context of historical and structural discrimination.” The Inter-American Commission also supported a national public inquiry with the caveat that Indigenous women must be consulted “at all stages from conception, to establishing terms of reference, implementation and evaluation.”

In summary, we request that your government immediately establish a pre-inquiry process that includes consultation with Indigenous women, families, Indigenous organizations and civil society organizations with knowledge and expertise regarding the elements and procedures that will be necessary to make a national public inquiry effective and meaningful. We enclose a copy of the *Blueprint for an Inquiry* report, which contains lessons from BC’s inquiry process. Your commitment to a national inquiry is a crucial step towards improving the safety and security of Indigenous women and girls in Canada, and we urge you to take proactive steps to avoid repeating BC’s past mistakes.

We would also like to be included in this pre-inquiry consultation process, and to offer you any and all assistance in this important endeavour. This issue is close to our hearts and is very important to our collective work in seeking justice for murdered and disappeared Indigenous women and girls. Please contact Andrea Glickman, Union of BC Indian Chiefs ([andrea@ubcic.bc.ca](mailto:andrea@ubcic.bc.ca)) to set up a meeting.

Sincerely,

Amnesty International Canada
Atira Housing
Battered Women’s Support Services
BC Assembly of First Nations
BC Civil Liberties Association
Butterflies in Spirit
Carrier Sekani Family Services
Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre
Ending Violence Association of BC
February 14th Women’s Memorial March Committee
First Nations Summit
First United Church
Lookout Emergency Aid Society
Native Women’s Association of Canada
Neskonlith Indian Band
PACE: Providing Alternatives Counselling & Education Society
PHS Community Services Society
Pivot Legal Society
Poverty and Human Rights Centre
RainCity Housing
Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs
Vancouver Council of Women
Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre Society
Vancouver Rape Relief and Women’s Shelter
Union Gospel Mission
West Coast LEAF
WISH Drop-in Centre Society
Women Against Violence Against Women
Ceejai Julien, family member
Beverley Jacobs, Jacobs Law