



September 24, 2014

To: Members of the CLC Canadian Council

Re: Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Sisters In Spirit (SIS) Vigils, October 4, 2014

Greetings,

This year marks the 9th annual Sisters In Spirit (SIS) vigils, which are held to raise awareness and demand action for missing and murdered First Nations, Inuit and Métis women and girls. The Canadian Labour Congress, affiliates and federations of labour have been longtime supporters of the campaign. Vigils are being organized throughout communities across the country on October 4th, 2014, including one on Parliament Hill.

Vigils, rallies and social media events are held to raise awareness and demand action for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The vigils also commemorate the women, girls, communities and families affected by this crisis by honouring their lives.

In 2013, there were 216 vigils held across the country and internationally. We encourage affiliates, federations of labour and labour councils to contact the Native Women's Association of Canada in order to participate in local vigils and to support the ongoing campaign for a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada.

Sisters In Spirit documented almost 600 deaths and disappearances of Indigenous women and girls before their funding was cut by the Harper government in 2010. Since the current Conservative government has failed to address or acknowledge the disproportionate number of deaths and disappearances, a coalition of community members called No More Silence has begun compiling data on a new database. This new database documents violent deaths of Indigenous women/ Two-Spirit and Trans in collaboration with Families of Sisters In Spirit, The Native Youth Sexual Health Network and the Well Living House at the Keenan Research Centre.

Canada's labour movement has long supported the Native Women's Association of Canada's demand that the federal government hold a National Inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada and to do so by involving Aboriginal women in the design, decision-making, process and

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implementation of this inquiry. The CLC has recently started a petition to demand justice for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls based on the research of the RCMP's report that documented close to 1,200 cases of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls between 1980 and 2012. Please continue to circulate the petition link to your members and promote it on your websites and social media pages:

<http://www.canadianlabour.ca/action-center/justice-canadas-aboriginal-women-and-girls>.

Member of Parliament Niki Ashton, New Democratic Party (NDP), is tabling M-444, a Private Member's Motion, which calls on the government to urgently establish a National Action Plan to address Violence against Women that includes the issues documented by NWAC, the RCMP and the various civil society groups. To read more about the motion and sign the NDP's petition visit: <http://nikiashton.ndp.ca/m-444>.

We encourage you to participate in any or all of the events planned for October 4th. To find out how please see the following links:

To register: <http://nwac.ca/programs/2014-vigil-registration>

To light a virtual candle for a loved one visit: <http://www.october4th.ca>

To sign on to the joint statement contact NWAC at: reception@nwac.ca

To learn more about No More Silence and/ or to add an Indigenous trans, two-spirited, woman from your community or workplace who has died a violent death to their community-run database visit: <http://www.itstartswithus-mmiw.com>.

The CLC looks forward to hearing about your support!

In solidarity,



Hassan Yussuff,
President

CC: CLC Women's Advisory Committee
CLC Human Rights' Advisory Committee
CLC Aboriginal Workers Working Group
CLC Executive Assistants
CLC National Directors
CLC Regional Directors

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