



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **AMC expresses disappointment with the failure of Canada to deliver the promised National Action Plan on MMIWG**

**Treaty One Territory, Manitoba** – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) Grand Chief Arlen Dumas is expressing serious concerns and disappointment with how a National Action Plan for the Calls to Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (The Inquiry) has stalled. Concerns about the initiation and the process have been voiced by the AMC Women’s Council throughout the Inquiry, particularly as it relates to the delivery of its interim report and its request for more funding and time.

Grand Chief Arlen Dumas says, “The failure of Canada to deliver on the Action Plan is yet another disappointment for the families of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) in Manitoba. Following the release of the Inquiry’s final report on June 3rd 2019, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Carolyn Bennett, assured the AMC that the report would not just sit on a shelf, and that a National Action Plan to address the longstanding issue would be established. For Canada to drag its feet on providing safety for our women, girls, and LGBT citizens, while being aware of the underlying societal issues and challenges that First Nations woman, girls and LGBT peoples continue to face, is unacceptable.”

Chief Francine Meeches of the Swan Lake First Nation and Chairperson of the AMC Women’s Council stated, “The AMC Women’s Council followed the proceedings of The Inquiry very closely throughout its mandate. Throughout The Inquiry and in every region of this country, at every hearing and engagement the Inquiry held, families, First Nations, and grassroots organizations pleaded for adequate resources to address the underlying and systemic issues that marginalize and devalue First Nations women in this country. The AMC Women’s Council calls on the Prime Minister to expedite a quality plan as soon as practicable, that will ensure that all 231 Calls for Justice of The Inquiry are implemented, including those that speak to reforms of the Justice system and the Child Welfare system. We cannot continue to wait because lives are at stake. Since the conclusion of The Inquiry, and since we have waited on the delivery of the National Action Plan, several of our First Nations women, girls, and LGBT family members have died in the city of Winnipeg and throughout Manitoba,” concluded Chief Meeches”.

“Our First Nations are completely aware of what is needed to keep our women, girls, and LGBT citizens safe. The AMC is putting Canada on notice that First Nations in Manitoba will not accept any further delay or deflection tactic on the release of the National Action Plan for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We will not accept an ineffective plan that doesn’t provide adequate resources to the experts in our Nations who could affect life changing measures for women and girls,” stated Grand Chief Dumas. “Action is needed now. It is unacceptable to blame the inactivity of this file on the current COVID-19 pandemic. If there was true will and intent from Minister Bennett, she would understand that action is needed more urgently during the pandemic, rather than affording an excuse for not acting on and making the Action Plan a priority,” concluded Grand Chief Dumas.



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**About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs**

*The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 per cent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Inineew (Cree), Anishininew (Ojibwe- Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate*