



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE FIRST NATIONS FAMILY ADVOCATE OFFICE AND THE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS SEND CONDOLENCES TO THE FIRST NATIONS FAMILIES WHO LOST THEIR LOVED ONES TO THE ONGOING VIOLENCE AGAINST FIRST NATIONS WOMEN

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) First Nations Family Advocate Office (FNFAO) and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) respond to the tragic deaths of four First Nations women in the last weeks of May and the growing cases of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls (MMIWG2S), and Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and any additional sexual orientations and gender identities (2SLGBTQIA+).

In the past two weeks, four First Nations women have tragically lost their lives to senseless acts of violence, including 24-year-old Rebecca Contois on May 16, 25-year-old Doris Trout on May 19, 31-year-old Tessa Perry on May 28, and 24-year-old Mary Krug on May 30.

“I extend my heartfelt condolences to the families and friends who have lost their loved ones and offer prayers of strength and healing to families as they grieve,” said AMC First Nations Family Advocate Cora Morgan. “These tragic deaths are a reminder of how much more work we must do to ensure the protection and safety of First Nations women and girls and to honour our mothers, aunties, sisters, and daughters.”

In April 2022, Statistics Canada released the *Violent victimization and perceptions of safety among First Nations, Metis, and Inuit women and among women living in remote areas of Canada* report, wherein it states that more than 6 in 10 Indigenous women (63%) experienced either physical or sexual assault in their lifetime (since the age 15). Of 63%, almost two-thirds were First Nations.

“The reality is that First Nations women live in constant fear for their lives and for their loved ones. There is little effort enacted on a general level by colonial institutions to remedy the disparagement and victimization of First Nations women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+. It is rare to find a First Nations person whose life has not been forever altered by the tragic loss of a beloved family member to the MMIWG2S epidemic – the time for action is now,” said AMC Chief Betsy Kennedy, Member of AMC Women’s Council.

Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, section 1.0 to 1.11 Calls to Justice, calls upon all levels of government to work diligently in partnership with First Nations to advance the calls for justice and immediately implement the necessary reporting mechanisms to provide the public with an updated and accurate database of MMIWG2, stringently advocate against the ongoing human rights violations, and ensure that resources to support families are First Nations-centred and First Nations-led to restore the balance that has been profoundly weakened by colonization.

“In Canada, there is an epidemic of violence perpetrated against First Nations women and girls. This violence is traced back to the beginning of colonization and the genocide brought by settler society. The assimilation of First Nations people dismantled the matriarchal structures of First Nations societies that honoured women, who held important leadership roles within their Nations. Today, this violence against First Nations women and girls is endemic in society’s culture and is ingrained within colonial institutions, laws, and systems,” said AMC First Nations Family Advocate Cora Morgan.

“The AMC calls on all levels of government to work with First Nations in Manitoba to immediately demonstrate their commitment to reconciliation by making the safety of First Nations women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ the main priority in the face of these devastating losses,” said Acting Grand Chief McLean.

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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 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Ininew (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.