

NFSC Recognizes the 2023 Women's Memorial March

February 14, 2023



**NATIONAL FAMILY AND
SURVIVORS CIRCLE**
Nothing About Us, Without Us

Today, February 14th, marks the 32nd annual Women's Memorial March, which honours the lives of Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people lost to violence. The march was started in 1992 in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES), on the traditional and unceded lands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples, in response to the murder of an Indigenous woman in the area. Now, this march takes place in communities across the country, which are organized and led by Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors.

The National Family and Survivors Circle (NFSC) recognizes and honours the families and survivors who deal with the grief and loss of their loved ones each day, and who have fought tirelessly for transformative change to ensure Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people can live with dignity and safety.

This ongoing genocide must end.

"An Indigenous woman, girl, or 2SLGBTQQIA+ person has been murdered or gone missing over 4000 times in this country," says NFSC Chair, Hilda Anderson-Pyrz, "And since we lack access to proper distinctions-based and intersectional data on those whose lives were taken, this is likely a severe underestimate."

This is acutely felt in areas like Winnipeg and the DTES, where the rates of violence against Indigenous women are disproportionately higher in a country where Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people are already disproportionately targeted.

While some progress has been made, the reality is that our governments, institutions, organizations, and industries are far too slow in implementing solutions — and this inaction is deadly. Each day, more Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people go missing or are murdered.

The lived experience, expertise, and capabilities of families, survivors, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people must be at the forefront of ending systemic and structural racism, violence, and genocide — it is a genocide where the numbers are increasing with each day of inaction.

We urge everyone to stand with us and other families and survivors today to demand actions that will lead to the transformative change that we deserve. It is more critical than ever for all governments (including Indigenous governments), law enforcement agencies, institutions, organizations, and industries to work with MMIWG2S+ families and survivors of gender- and race-based violence to end the genocide, implement the 2021 National Action Plan, and fulfill the 231 Calls for Justice outlined in the 2019 Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Anything less will perpetuate the genocide, gender-based violence, and the human costs faced by Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors.

About the NFSC: The NFSC comprises First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women from diverse backgrounds who use their lived expertise to advocate for centring the voices of families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, survivors of gender-based violence, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, and made significant contributions to the 2021 National Action Plan. They urge all governments, organizations, and people to implement the 231 Calls for Justice from the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and for their impact to be felt on the ground by families and survivors. To learn more, visit: familysurvivorscircle.ca

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