

NFSC Concerned About High Number of Incomplete Investigations of MMIWG Cases by the Thunder Bay Police Service



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

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WINNIPEG – The National Family and Survivors Circle (NFSC) is deeply concerned with the lack of accountability and transparency of the Thunder Bay Police Service highlighted in findings of multiple reports showing disproportionate impacts to Indigenous people. In a March 16, 2022, news article, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) revealed a leaked report identifying incomplete police investigations and lack of coroner involvement in 25 unsolved cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls over a 20-year span. The news article indicated the report recommended that these cases be reviewed.

The NFSC expresses our deepest sympathies to the families who have been impacted by the loss of their loved one. We stand with each you in solidarity. No individual should have to continuously relive the trauma of losing their loved one due to systemic failures, discrimination, inequity, and inaction of governments, agencies, and institutions.

The NFSC is calling on governments, including Indigenous governments, agencies, institutions, and all Canadians to urgently act on the implementation of the 231 Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Final Report. Specifically, **Call for Justice 9.6** states:

We call upon all police services to establish an independent, special investigation unit for the investigation of incidents of failures to investigate, police misconduct, and all forms of discriminatory practices and mistreatment of Indigenous Peoples within their police service. This special investigation unit must be transparent in practice and report at least annually to Indigenous communities, leadership, and people in their jurisdiction.

There must be accountability mechanisms in place to monitor the implementation of the 231 Calls for Justice and the impacts of the actions. **Call for Justice 1.7** is to establish a National Indigenous and Human Rights Ombudsperson, independent of governments, with the authority to receive complaints from Indigenous individuals and communities on Indigenous and human rights violations, conduct thorough and independent evaluations of government services for Indigenous people and communities, and determine compliance with human and Indigenous rights laws.

Hilda Anderson-Pyrz, NFSC Chair, states, “The 231 Calls for Justice are legal imperatives. As a country, we must act now to create transformative change where impact is felt on the ground by Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, families, and survivors. The ultimate goal must be to end all forms of gender-based violence.”

About the NFSC: The National Family and Survivors Circle (NFSC) was established by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs in response to the National Inquiry's 231 Calls for Justice and Principles for Change. The group is composed of Indigenous women of diverse backgrounds, strengths, and capabilities who use their lived expertise to advocate for the engagement of families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, survivors of gender- and race-based violence, and 2SLGBTQQA+ people in the development and implementation of a National Action Plan to end the genocide. To learn more, visit: familysurvivorscircle.ca

Please see sources referenced:

1. 231 Calls of Justice: www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Calls_for_Justice.pdf
2. APTN News Article, March 16, 2022: www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/thunder-bay-police-board-chair-apologizes-to-families-says-board-not-currently-focus-of-ongoing-investigations/

For more information or to schedule interviews, contact: info@familysurvivorscircle.ca