



# Native Women's Association of Canada

July 28, 2010

Dear friends,

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) has just recently learned of and would like to extend our appreciation for the support by NDP MP Irene Mathysen and the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) in their creation of a petition to ensure that the Federal Government take steps to renew funding for Phase II of the Sisters In Spirit (SIS) initiative called "Evidence to Action."

For the past five years, the Native Women's Association of Canada's (NWAC) Sisters In Spirit initiative has worked to identify root causes, trends and circumstances of violence that have led to disappearance and death of Aboriginal women and girls. In March 2010, NWAC released the report "*What Their Stories Tell Us*" which provided evidence that 582 Aboriginal women and girls have gone missing or been murdered in Canada.

The fact that nearly 600 mothers, daughters, sisters, aunties and grandmothers have been lost to violence in this country makes this the most pervasive human rights crisis facing Canada today. Their loss is felt in every Aboriginal community from coast-to coast-to coast.

NWAC is pleased to hear that the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls is being recognized as a Canadian issue, one that is rallying political leaders and the labour movement. Your support is invaluable and we hope you continue to spread the message that we are in an urgent state of affairs with regards to the safety and security of Aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

We are confident that funding will be renewed and that our positive relationship with Status of Women Canada and other government departments will continue.

As you sign this petition, please be mindful that we all need to be working together to develop concrete actions and activities that will end the cycle of violence that is impacting Aboriginal women and their families.

NWAC has developed a National Plan of Action that will be released on August 4th, 2010, and we are looking for support from all levels of government. Moreover, we are looking for a commitment from all Canadians that systemic forms of violence and indifference will no longer be tolerated.

For those looking to be part of the solution, NWAC asks that you read our most recent report "*What Their Stories Tell Us.*" We also suggest that you attend or host a Sisters In Spirit vigil on October 4th 2010 to honour the lives of all the missing and murdered Aboriginal women. An impressive 72 SIS vigils were held nationwide in 2009, uniting thousands of Canadians. Our report as well as more information on the SIS Vigil movement for social change can be found at [www.nwac.ca](http://www.nwac.ca) .

Again, thank you for your support and we hope to see your continued commitment support for the issue in the near future.

In peace and friendship,

Jeannette Corbiere Lavell

President of the Native Women`s Association of Canada (NWAC)