



Native Women's Association of Canada

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Native Women's Association of Canada Disappointed in Yesterday's Budget Announcement

February 12, 2014 Ottawa, ON - The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) was initially pleased to hear about the announcement regarding new investments into addressing the situation of missing and murdered Aboriginal women in the new federal budget but, "this budget does not go far enough to address violence against Aboriginal women in general and falls far behind our position of calling for a National Public Inquiry and Comprehensive Action Plan," stated President Michèle Taïna Audette.

The 2014 federal budget includes a two-year renewal of the Aboriginal Justice Strategy and resources aimed at ending violence, including violence against Indigenous women and girls. Although these will be helpful for community measures, these investments will do nothing to address the targeting of Aboriginal women and girls leading to their disappearances and deaths by non-Aboriginal offenders because they believe their actions will go uninvestigated. "The other investments into DNA and other government justice measures are not specific to Aboriginal women, and without specific goals to reduce violence and murders of our women, it is unlikely to make an impact," stated Michèle Taïna Audette.

The 2014 federal budget released by Finance Minister Jim Flaherty confirmed new core funding of \$1.25 billion from 2016–17 to 2018–19 in support of First Nations education with an annual growth rate of 4.5 %, and included an Enhanced Education Fund that will provide funding of \$160 million over 4 years starting in 2015–16 and \$500 million over 7 years beginning in 2015–16 for a new First Nations Education Infrastructure Fund. NWAC is pleased that overall education funds are to be increased but is concerned that once again no specific measures or supports are carved out to meet the needs of more than half the Aboriginal population, that is, Aboriginal women, many of whom are single parents.

The Economic Action Plan 2014 proposes to provide \$36 million over four years to renew the Computers for Schools Program, providing students and interns with access to information and communications technology equipment and skills training. Yet, only \$150,000 was allocated to Status of Women Canada in 2014–15 to increase mentorship among women entrepreneurs. "This is a totally unacceptable," said President Michèle Taïna Audette.

President Michèle Taïna Audette expressed her hope for the future by saying, "We must remember to create programs specifically for Aboriginal women when we talk about education, economic development, safety and security, so that we can truly begin to improve their lives. Education and economic security, skills and training for women will

truly provide Aboriginal women with options and help them to not only participate in the economy but make it thrive. We must work together, leaders and governments, to ensure that these measures will make an impact on the very people they were meant to reach. Unfortunately, this budget will not permit the realization of my dreams and aspirations for Aboriginal women, the most disadvantaged group in Canada.”

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is founded on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well being of First Nations and Métis women within First Nation, Métis and Canadian societies. As a national organization representing Aboriginal women since 1974, NWAC's mandate is to achieve equality for all Aboriginal women in Canada.

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