

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

Aboriginal Peoples' Commission (APC)

The fact that over 600 Aboriginal women are murdered and missing is a national shame, and the fact that the Conservative government is refusing to take serious action — and instead the United Nations feels compelled to investigate — is an international embarrassment.

Since May, 2009 the Liberal Party of Canada has consistently called for a government-funded public investigation into how and why the number of murdered and missing Aboriginal women and girls is so unacceptably high.

On February 19, 2013 a unanimously passed Liberal motion, introduced by Liberal Aboriginal affairs critic Carolyn Bennett, created the Special Committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. This committee will have the mandate to conduct hearings on this critical matter and propose solutions to address the root causes of violence against Indigenous women.

Liberals still believe that a full national public inquiry will be required, but the work of this committee will be an important step in finally providing some justice for the victims, healing for the families, and recommendations to eliminate the systemic causes of this tragedy.



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Liberal Critic for Aboriginal Affairs

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With the creation of the APC in 1990, the Liberal Party of Canada became the first and only political party to formally recognize the unique place that Indigenous people occupy in Canada.

Since its inception, the APC has played an important role in the direction of the Liberal Party of Canada. The APC is actively involved in the Liberal policy development process, driving the development of the Party's Aboriginal Platform and reflecting the direction of Aboriginal members, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

Through the development of Aboriginal policy, general elections, and the Aboriginal caucus, the Commission has successfully represented the concerns of Aboriginal Canadians at the Party level, thereby increasing Aboriginal participation in the broader political system.

The APC and the Liberal Party recognize that our society is richer for the full participation and contributions of Indigenous people and the Liberal Party will continue to work to ensure that this contribution is understood and strengthened.

Have your say on policy! Attend the Urban Aboriginal Policy Summit on June 18 at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto or make a suggestion any time here:
apc-cpa.liberal.ca/policy/have-your-say/

Liberals Support Idle No More



Liberal

KELOWNA ACCORD

It took 24 months of personal effort by then-Liberal Prime Minister Paul Martin to establish the trust and respect upon which progress could be based – engaging the federal government, all provinces and territories, and all national Aboriginal organizations. As a result, in 2005 First Ministers and National Aboriginal Leaders produced a landmark agreement that has come to be known as the Kelowna Accord. A ten-year commitment was established to close the gap in the quality of life that now exists between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians. All agreed to take immediate action in five key areas: health, education, housing, relationships, and economic opportunities. The following policies are in accordance with the principles set out in the Kelowna Accord.

The Conservative government cancelled the Kelowna Accords upon taking office in 2006 and has made little progress to work collaboratively to improve the standard of living and quality of life for Aboriginals.

EDUCATION

- Lift the 2% cap on financial support for Aboriginal education and increase funding for Aboriginal K-12 education by \$300 million;
- Work with the Métis community to establish a new national Métis scholarship program for post-secondary education;
- Increase Canadian society's awareness of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis through curriculum development that reflects Aboriginal history, cultures and traditions;
- Increase the number of qualified Aboriginal teachers, as well as promoting cultural awareness among Aboriginal teachers;

HOUSING

- Involve Aboriginal peoples in the determination of their own housing solutions;
- Re-think current approaches to Aboriginal housing policy, service and supports by working with provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal partners to establish a renewed Affordable Housing Framework. The new Framework will focus on the particular needs of Aboriginal peoples, including reducing homelessness, maintaining and renewing existing affordable housing stock in good condition, addressing urgent needs and long-term sustainable solutions, stimulating new construction of affordable housing. Operationalize this with \$600 million in new funding over two years;
- Supporting housing solutions for Aboriginal women in transition and single parents;

HEALTH

Prior to the Kelowna Accord, the Liberal Government of Canada developed the Blueprint on Aboriginal Health - a ten-year transformative plan intended to, without unnecessary duplication and creation of parallel healthcare systems, lead to concrete initiatives to:

- Improve delivery and access to health services;
- Ensure that Aboriginal peoples benefit fully from improvements to Canadian health systems;
- Set up health promotion and disease prevention measures and programs that will address other determinants of health (e.g. housing, education).

These investments will build on the \$700 million committed at the September 13, 2004 Special Meeting of First Ministers and National Aboriginal Leaders.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

- Address key components of economic opportunities for all Aboriginal peoples in areas such as economic infrastructure, training and skills development, connectivity, improving the regulatory environment, resource development, and business development.
- Facilitate effective economic opportunity partnerships among all parties (e.g. federal, provincial, and territorial governments, Aboriginal communities and institutions, private sector).
- With Aboriginal Leaders, initiate regional distinction-based processes, which are inclusive of all Aboriginal peoples, as well as with federal-provincial-territorial governments and private sector representatives to identify economic opportunity strategies.

LAND CLAIMS

The Liberal Party of Canada is committed to resolving outstanding land claims and to ensuring that the right to self-determination and self-government means something real and tangible for First Nations across Canada. A Liberal Government of Canada would work with First Nations to reach speedy, good faith resolutions of specific and comprehensive land claims.

INDIAN ACT

Canada must work in partnership with First Nations to move beyond the Indian Act, and establish modern, effective, and efficient Crown-First Nations relations. Liberals believe it is important to move beyond the legacy of the Indian Act, while ensuring that existing Aboriginal relationships, agreements and treaties with the Crown are not compromised, which could negatively affect the lives of Aboriginal peoples.