



**MEDIA RELEASE** | June 4, 2019

## **RECLAIMING POWER AND PLACE: THE FINAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

**tkwəłniwt (Westbank), Syilx Territory:** The Syilx Okanagan Nation Chiefs Executive Council welcomes *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, released June 3, 2019 by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls calls for significant, systemic, transformative change. This official report recognizes the systematic race- and gender-based violence against Indigenous women, girls, trans and two-spirit people in Canada as a genocide that needs to be addressed and acted upon immediately. The 231 Calls for Justice provided significant recommendations for action, including specific calls on human rights, policing, the justice system, corrections, health care, education, media, social work and child welfare.

The Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) applauds the release of this long-overdue report, adding another step on the path towards reparation and healing from the ongoing traumas of colonialism. The ONA CEC has been monitoring and actively engaged in the process of its development, having provided a submission on behalf of the Nation, as well as assisting and supporting specific Syilx families with their own statements and healing.

Dr. Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, CEC Chair, states, “The time to act is now. The genocidal acts have been clear. This issue persists, with Indigenous women, girls, trans and two-spirit peoples who continue to be missing or face rampant violence on a daily basis. Although the inquiry has completed its final report and Calls for Justice, there are many families within Syilx territory who have not told their stories, who have not received justice for their mothers/sisters/daughters, who feel unrepresented and unheard. There are multiple levels of work that remain, the challenges reverberate throughout our communities, demanding healing and reparation to take place across multiple levels of systems, including family, community, Nation, and all levels of government. Women are the backbone of our families and communities, it will take concerted action by all levels of government and the justice system to restore women to their proper place of power and dignified respect.”

The ONA has implemented a program called You Empowered Strong, now in its last year of funding by the Federal government, to begin addressing and de-normalizing gender based violence. The work must continue. We call on the Provincial and Federal Governments to ensure adequate funding to fully support the implementation of the Calls for Justice.

To read the full Call for Justice visit:

[www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Calls\\_for\\_Justice.pdf](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Calls_for_Justice.pdf)

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