



# Gathering of Family Members of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Delta Hotel

Ottawa, Ontario

On February 26<sup>th</sup>, a gathering of family members of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls will be held in Ottawa, Ontario. This **Family Gathering** is in advance of two other related events taking place on February 27<sup>th</sup>, also in Ottawa, Ontario: the National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) and the Peoples' Gathering.

The **National Roundtable**, taking place on the same day as the Peoples' Gathering, is a working meeting among delegates from Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments and National Aboriginal Organizations (NAOs), to develop and act upon coordinated solutions to end violence against Indigenous women and girls.

The **Peoples' Gathering** is in response to the great interest generated around the National MMIWG Roundtable with the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments and NAOs; it provides a venue for public discussion and recommendations for action to prevent and end violence against Indigenous women and girls. It is open to all those who want to contribute to the dialogue and will be webcast for those unable to attend in person.

During the **Family Gathering**, four representatives will be selected among the families to act as ceremonial witnesses to the National Roundtable. As overall space is limited, all NAOs are working together to ensure the voice of the families are heard and are convening a gathering of family members of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in advance of the National Roundtable. The Family Gathering:

- ❖ Puts families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls first.
- ❖ Enables real dialogue between family members on solutions to end violence against Indigenous Women and Girls.
- ❖ Supports family members of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in developing a presentation to the National Roundtable.

## HOW CAN I ATTEND?

- This gathering is for family members of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Any family member is welcome and encouraged to attend.
- If you are a family member and plan to attend, we ask that you pre-register for this gathering to assist in meeting planning such as meals and health supports.

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

- Registration is FREE.
- The following information will be collected on the registration form: Name of MMIWG, name of family member(s), your contact information, and medical/dietary considerations.
- For more information please contact: **Irene Goodwin**, Director Violence Prevention & Response, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples at [i.goodwin@abo-peoples.org](mailto:i.goodwin@abo-peoples.org) or telephone at 613-747-6022.

## WHAT CAN I EXPECT WHEN I ATTEND?

The Family Gathering is based on the following considerations:

- ❖ Family members of MMIWG have a right to be included in matters that impact them and their loved ones.
- ❖ Family members of MMIWG need the time to discuss materials to be presented or deliberated upon at the National Roundtable, provide recommendations on needed solutions and how these can be moved forward.
- ❖ Family members will develop recommendations in three key areas to bring to the National Roundtable:
  1. Prevention and Awareness
  2. Community Safety Plans and Protocols
  3. Policing Measures and Justice Responses
- ❖ Family members of MMIWG will select among themselves ceremonial witnesses to attend and speak at the National Roundtable and the Peoples' Gathering.

## WHO ELSE MAY BE IN ATTENDANCE?

- Health supports
- Elders
- Facilitator(s)
- Family support person - Family members may bring a support person into the room with them.

## ARE OBSERVERS ALLOWED?

- This is for MMIWG family members and their family support person; observers are not allowed.
- Individuals, organizations, and media will be asked to respect the need for family members to meet with each other.
- The general public and media are welcome to attend and participate in the open Peoples' Gathering that will take place at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario on February 27, 2015.

## WHAT IS A CEREMONIAL WITNESS?

- Four ceremonial witnesses will be selected to attend the National Roundtable, one from each of the four directions.
- The witnesses will share the vision of the families to the National Roundtable and will observe, provide reflections and report on the discussions.
- The families will have the opportunity to select ceremonial witnesses to the National Roundtable during this gathering.

For more information on the **Family Gathering** please contact:

**Irene Goodwin**, Director Violence Prevention & Response, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples  
[i.goodwin@abo-peoples.org](mailto:i.goodwin@abo-peoples.org), Telephone: 613-747-6022