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UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS
CHIEFS COUNCIL
JUNE 1ST - JUNE 2ND, 2011
VANCOUVER, B.C.

Resolution no. 2011-30

RE: Support for a National Federal Inquiry
"Royal Commission on Violence Against Indigenous Girls and Women"

WHEREAS in Canada, Indigenous women are five times more likely than other women to die as a result of violence and this problem is a national and international crisis. Violence against Indigenous girls and women must be addressed and eliminated;

WHEREAS there are reports that more than 582 Indigenous women are known to be either missing or murdered currently in Canada, and many non-government organizations are conducting research and spreading awareness both nationally and internationally such as the Amnesty International Stolen Sisters and No More Stolen Sisters reports;

WHEREAS many of those who have gone missing or who have been found murdered are girls who may be in the care of the provincial ministries responsible for child and family services and foster care;

WHEREAS in order to redress the systemic racism and to eliminate the violence perpetrated against Indigenous girls and women within Canada, there is a responsibility by all;

WHREAS the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) gave a 2008 directive to Canada to "examine the reasons for the failure to investigate cases of missing or murdered Aboriginal women and to take the necessary steps to remedy the deficiencies in the system [and] carry our an analysis of those cases in order to determine whether there is a racialized pattern to the disappearances and take measures to address the problem if that is the case;

Whereas the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* states:

> **Article 21 (2)**: States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall

be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.

Article 22 (2): States shall take measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination";

WHEREAS the Union of BC Indian Chiefs has consistently worked with like-minded organizations to take action and bring attention to the critical and devastating issue of violence against Indigenous girls and women;

WHEREAS by Resolution 2008-30, the UBCIC Chiefs Council called for a full public inquiry into the Missing Women of the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver and the Highway of Tears; and by Resolution 2010-13, the UBCIC Chiefs Council acknowledged that Indigenous Nations women have the right to personal safety and security, no matter what their socio-economic status may be, yet Indigenous Nations women experience disproportionately high levels of violence;

WHEREAS the Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) presented to the UBCIC Chiefs Council on June 1, 2011, the need for a Royal Commission on Violence Against Indigenous Girls and Women to address the gaps and to address the issues affecting Indigenous girls and women, but also to make concrete and specific recommendations to end violence against Indigenous girls and women at a national level;

WHEREAS the BWSS has identified the following potential focus of the Royal Commission on Violence Against Indigenous Girls and Women:

1) The investigation of cases of missing and murdered Indigenous girls and women across Canada and the response of the designated policing agencies and the Canadian, provincial and territorial governments more broadly; and the response of, if applicable, the provincial and territorial ministries responsible for child and family services including foster care;
2) The fulfillment of the needs of the families of missing Indigenous girls and women and families of murdered Indigenous girls and women, as each of their needs are different;
3) The empowerment of Indigenous girls and women;
4) Affirming Gender-balance and Healing;
5) The judicial and law enforcement systems within Canada;
6) Broader awareness and understanding of the impacts of colonization towards Indigenous girls and women in Canada;
7) The allocation of resources to the investigation and determination of the identity of perpetrators of violence against Indigenous girls and women.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCIC Chiefs Council supports the call for the federal government to convene a national inquiry, a Royal Commission on Violence Against Indigenous Girls and Women to address the gaps and to make concrete and specific recommendations to end violence against Indigenous girls and women at a national level;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the UBCIC Chiefs Council supports the recommendation that the Royal Commission on Violence Against Indigenous Girls and Women be a combined fact-finding and policy-based mandate and should include Indigenous and/or woman chief

commissioner(s), along with an Indigenous youth council, infusing the inquiry with both Indigenous, woman and girl perspectives;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive to communicate full support for a Royal Commission on Violence Against Indigenous Girls and Women to First Nation communities, and to the provincial, territorial and federal governments of Canada, including at the upcoming National Symposium on Violence Against Aboriginal Women in Vancouver, BC;

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive and the UBCIC Women's Representative to work with like-minded organizations including the Battered Women's Support Services to further advocate for a Royal Commission, and report back to the UBCIC Chiefs Council on progress.

Moved: **Kukpi7 Wayne Christian, Splatsin**
Seconded: **Chief Ko'waintco Michel, Nooaitch First Nation**
Disposition: **Carried**
Date: **June 2, 2011**