

**JUSTICE 2024**

**No more stolen  
sisters:**

**Missing and murdered  
Indigenous women, girls, and  
gender-diverse persons**

**Participant Materials**



## Some Resources for Information and Support

### In English, for Canada:

- National, toll-free 24/7 crisis call line providing immediate emotional assistance related to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls: 1-844-413-6649
- Native Women's Association of Canada: <https://nwac.ca/>
- Pauktuutit: Inuit Women of Canada: <https://pauktuutit.ca/>
- Women of the Métis Nation: <https://metiswomen.org/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-and-girls/>
- National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>

### En français, au Canada:

- Ligne d'appel d'urgence nationale sans frais, accessible 24 heures sur 24, 7 jours sur 7, qui offre de l'aide émotionnelle immédiate à toute personne en ayant besoin concernant les femmes et les filles Autochtones disparues ou assassinées : 1-844-413-6649
- Femmes Autochtones du Québec: <https://faq-qnw.org/>
- L'Enquête nationale sur les femmes et les filles Autochtones disparues et assassinées: <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/fr/>

### For the United States:

- The U.S. Department of the Interior: <https://www.bia.gov/service/mmu/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-people-crisis>
- Native Hope: <https://www.nativehope.org/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-mmiw>
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women USA: <https://mmiwusa.org/> or [contact@mmiwusa.org](mailto:contact@mmiwusa.org)
- Stronghearts Native Helpline: 1-844-762-8483 or <https://www.Strongheartshelpline.org>
- Victim Connect Hotline: 1-855-4-VICTIM (484-2846)
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233); TTY: 1-800-787-3224

[Your Name]  
[Your Mailing Address]  
[City, State, ZIP Code]  
[Email Address (optional)]  
[Phone Number (optional)]  
[Date]

Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Prime Minister Trudeau,

I am very concerned about the ongoing crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse persons. Therefore, I ask that the Government of Canada:

- Immediately create a national Red Dress Alert system to notify the public when an Indigenous woman, girl, or two-spirit person goes missing;
- Without further delay, release an implementation plan for the government's National Action Plan, with measurable and costed steps to accelerate fulfilment of all the Calls for Justice from the final report of the National Inquiry Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit people;
- With the Government of Manitoba, prioritize and adequately fund a search of the landfills to return Mercedes Myran and Morgan Harris of Long Plain First Nation, and Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe to their loved ones without further delay.

Thank you for your attention to these matters, and I look forward to hearing your reply.

Sincerely,

## **USW 2019 National Policy Conference Resolution E3 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women**

WHEREAS in Canada, Indigenous women and girls are four times more likely to be murdered than non-Indigenous women and girls; and

WHEREAS the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls will deliver its final report to the federal government on April 30, 2019; and

WHEREAS since the Trudeau Liberal government took office in November 2015, another 125 Indigenous women and girls have gone missing or been found murdered.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the United Steelworkers work with Indigenous women's organizations and other community groups to pressure the government to act on the recommendations of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and to otherwise take steps to end the epidemic of violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the United Steelworkers promote, among all its members, staff and officers, the principle of treating women and all people with respect and dignity, whether on or off the job.

Submitted by Locals 838, 1998, 2251, 2724, 4120, 4610, 7493, 8748, 8794

# **Taking Action on Gender-Based Violence and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women: What Steelworkers can do about temporary work camps and remote permanent work sites**

As part of our commitment to be an ally with Indigenous peoples, USW spoke with the Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC) to learn their views on how our union could help implement the recommendations of the national inquiry. NWAC asked USW to develop a position on “man camps” and to engage our members, staff, and leaders in appropriate actions to increase the safety of Indigenous women and girls.

“Man camps” are temporary work camps housing mostly male employees working on the construction of resource-development projects.

Camp life is characterized by long hours, high pay, social and geographic isolation, and a hyper-masculinized work culture where physical violence and misogyny are considered “normal”. Camp workers are mostly non-Indigenous young men who are far from their home communities, have no ties to the Indigenous communities near the work site and no understanding of their cultures. This contributes to a “freedom from accountability” among camp workers who go into nearby communities to “blow off steam”.

Several research projects have noted a correlation between the arrival of the camps and an increase in gender-based violence.<sup>1</sup> That violence can take the form of sexual assault, an increase in sexual harassment and workers propositioning women inside and outside the workplace, and a sudden increase in the sex trade in affected communities.

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls found substantial evidence that temporary work camps are implicated in higher rates of violence against Indigenous women at the camps and in neighbouring communities.<sup>2</sup> It recommended that industry, government, service-providers and other involved parties:

- Consider the safety and security of all Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA (Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer,

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<sup>1</sup> “Indigenous Communities and Industrial Camps”, February 2017, Firelight Group with Lake Babine Nation and Nak’azdii Whut’en, [https://firelight.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Firelight-work-camps-Feb-8-2017\\_FINAL.pdf](https://firelight.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Firelight-work-camps-Feb-8-2017_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> “Deeper Dive: Resource Extraction Projects and Violence against Indigenous Women”, *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, June 2019, pages 584-94.

questioning, intersex and asexual) people at all stages of a development. Ensure they benefit equally from development.

- Mitigate risks identified in those assessments prior to approving a project.
- Include provisions in impact benefit agreements that ensure women and girls benefit equitably from a project.
- Recognize increased demands on social infrastructure including policing, social services and health services.

Given the industries our union organizes, USW is less likely than other unions to represent workers engaged in the construction of resource-development project sites. Once that construction is completed, the story is different. We do represent members working at a number of permanent remote sites where long-term mining, smelting, and other processing operations take place. Some of these sites operate on a “fly in, fly out” basis, but the workers have stable, on-going employment and may also be deliberately hired from near-by Indigenous communities.

However, even permanent work sites can be prone to gender-based violence.<sup>3</sup> Workers are far from home, family, and other structures that usually guide our behaviour. Employers may not provide safe, private hygiene and sleeping facilities and may not set and enforce codes of conduct that prevent sexual harassment and sexual violence. And sites may host contractors and other, more itinerant workers who do repairs and maintenance or expand facilities, who may engage in sexually predatory behaviour on- and off-site.

And the USW also represents workers in other industries who travel to work, far from home, in remote areas near Indigenous communities and/or work in mixed-gender crews in remote settings.

Some things that USW can do to help end the violence associated with temporary work camps include:

- Inform leaders, staff representatives, organizers, and members about the problems currently associated with temporary work camps and permanent work sites, and ask for their cooperation in promoting safe and respectful behaviour by all workers. Information could be provided in the form of briefing notes, articles in union publications, and content in relevant union courses.
- When asked by government or industry for our views on resource-development projects, ask that projects be designed and developed with the safety of

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<sup>3</sup> Moodie, Sue, Aja Mason, and Lois Moorcroft. May 2021. *Never Until Now: Indigenous and Racialized Women's Experiences Working in Yukon and Northern British Columbia Mine Camps*. Watson Lake, YT: Liard Aboriginal Women's Society. (PDF) <http://www.liardaboriginalwomen.ca/index.php/never-until-now-laws-mining-report/file> (Disponible en anglais seulement)

Indigenous women and girls, and of female workers, in mind. Refer to the national inquiry recommendations. Ask that Indigenous women from affected communities be involved in consultations and decision-making, from the beginning.

- Lobby governments to develop effective strategies to end gender-based violence and to increase funding for Indigenous-controlled social services and community infrastructure
- Insist that employers shoulder their responsibility to create safe and healthy workplaces
- Where workers are likely to purchase the services of sex-trade workers, encourage the view that “workers are workers”, deserving of fair pay, respect, and a violence-free work environment, regardless of their occupation.
- Continue to promote the union’s *Unionism on Turtle Island* and *Be More than a Bystander* training.

By being aware of and sensitive to the risks of increased violence against Indigenous women and girls, Steelworker staff, local union leaders, and bargaining committees can take proactive steps to increase safety in the communities where we live and work.



## MMIWG2S Calls for Justice: What Steelworkers Can Do

**Steelworkers and all Canadians can support these “Calls for Justice” from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two Spirit Persons:**

- ✓ Speak out against violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two Spirit/ LGBTQ+ peoples.
- ✓ Learn the true history of Canada and Indigenous history. Celebrate Indigenous Peoples’ history, cultures, pride, and diversity. Acknowledge the land you live on and its importance to local Indigenous communities, both historically and today.
- ✓ Protect, support and promote the safety of women, girls, and Two Spirit/LGBTQ+ people by respecting them and their right to determine their own solutions.
- ✓ Hold all governments accountable to implement the Calls for Justice set out in the Final Report, such as:
  - Immediately ensure that Indigenous peoples have access to safe housing, clean drinking water, and adequate food.
  - Eliminate discriminatory provisions from the *Indian Act* that have disconnected women from their communities and ended their access to rights and benefits.
  - Provide accessible healing programs and support for all children of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit/LGBTQ+ people and their family members.
  - Implement a National Action Plan to address violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two Spirit/LGBTQ+ people which would include equitable access to basic rights such as employment, housing, and education.
  - Recognize Indigenous jurisdiction over child welfare, and stop removing children from their families on the basis of poverty or cultural bias.
  - Ensure that the children of murdered or missing Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit/LGBTQ+ people can be raised by family members in their communities.
  - Ensure that mining and development projects take into account the safety and security of Indigenous women, girls and Two Spirit/LGBTQ+ people, as well as their equitable benefit from development.

For more information on the National Inquiry Final Report, go to [usw.ca/resources/national-inquiry-into-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-girls-and-two-spirit-lgbtq-people/](http://usw.ca/resources/national-inquiry-into-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-girls-and-two-spirit-lgbtq-people/) or [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report).





