



February 27, 2015

## **Open Letter to Participants of the February 27 National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**

Dear Participants:

As President of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA), I write to you today as you seek to address violence against Indigenous women and girls.

This national issue has dominated CASHRA discussions and continues to cause great concern amongst our members. Indeed, CASHRA passed a unanimous motion on this issue in February 2013. This motion can be found on our website at: [cashra.ca/news/cashra-motion-on-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-and-girls.html](http://cashra.ca/news/cashra-motion-on-missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-and-girls.html)

As you know, Canada has a strong human rights legal framework and is signatory to various international human rights instruments that protect Canadians against discrimination. Yet despite these measures, the fact remains that there has been little action so far in addressing and preventing the root causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls, including poverty and systemic discrimination.

The problem requires real, sustainable solutions that demand an unprecedented degree of effort and commitment, with federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous communities and organizations working together. This roundtable is one positive step towards realizing that goal.

We would like to applaud the national Aboriginal organizations and the communities, families and individuals they represent for their tireless efforts in raising awareness of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. We commend provincial and territorial governments that have lent their voices in support and we also recognize the federal government's *Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crimes against Aboriginal Women and Girls*. Each of you plays an important role in addressing this critical issue.

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Today, as you represent your respective organizations and jurisdictions, we welcome your consideration of the human rights concerns underpinning your discussions. We are confident that through concerted efforts and implementation of concrete actions, we can bring about an end to this unacceptable situation that all too often leaves human rights protections unfulfilled.

If we can support your collective efforts to protect the human rights of Indigenous women and girls in any way, please contact us, either individually, or collectively as members of CASHRA.

We wish you all the best in your deliberations. We look forward to hearing about the developments and steps being taken to deal with this urgent matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Langtry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a stylized "L".

David Langtry