



February 25, 2015

The Right Hon. Stephen Harper
Prime Minister
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Fax: 613-941-6900

Email: pm@pm.gc.ca

Re: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women National Roundtable

Dear Prime Minister,

We write today to encourage your support for and participation in the upcoming National Roundtable on Indigenous Women and Girls on February 27, 2015.

The Canadian Council of Churches Human Trafficking Working Group is confronted all too often with the appalling realities many Aboriginal women and girls in Canada face on a daily basis. This reality was confirmed for us late last year in a presentation to our group by the Native Women's Association of Canada where we learned that Indigenous women and girls are at a higher risk of being trafficked and of facing violence than non-Indigenous women and girls in Canada.

While the Government's leadership in passing the *Protection of Communities and Vulnerable Peoples Act* evidenced a clear understanding of the challenges facing many vulnerable Canadians, one need only pick up a newspaper to see how uniquely vulnerable Indigenous women and girls are to violence, exploitation and trafficking. More needs to be done. This past summer, Tina Fontaine was brutally murdered in Winnipeg only a month after arriving in the city. Sadly, her story is far from an anomaly; stories like these are repeated too often across this country.

We urge the government to demonstrate strong leadership and action, in partnership with Indigenous communities and leadership, to listen to Indigenous women, courageously uncover the causes, and develop holistic and responsive solutions.

The impact is being felt from coast to coast to coast and in order to address these tragedies all Canadians and levels of government must act together. We were pleased to learn that Ministers Valcourt and Ambrose will be attending the Roundtable. However, we ask that you would also, as leader of this country, make every effort to attend. Your presence and participation at the Roundtable would send a strong and definitive message that violence against and exploitation of Indigenous women and children is not acceptable in Canada.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. C. Lucking". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Lucking
Chair, Human Trafficking in Canada Working Group

cc:

The Honourable Bernard Valcourt, M.P., Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern
Development

The Honourable Kellie Leitch, M.P., Minister of the Status of Women

The Honourable Peter MacKay, M.P., Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

The Honourable Steven Blaney, M.P., Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness

The Honourable Rona Ambrose, M.P., Minister of Health

Thomas Mulcair, M.P., Leader of the Official Opposition

Justin Trudeau, M.P., Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada

Elizabeth May, M.P., Leader of the Green Party of Canada