

OPEN LETTER TO THE CHIEFS OF THE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS

MAY 25, 2022

We the undersigned, compel the Chiefs of the AMC to abide the AMC Constitution and resolutions passed by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs-in-Assembly and the Executive Council of Chiefs. We acknowledge that the Grand Chief is accountable to both the AMC-in-assembly and to the Executive Council of Chiefs. We compel that the "Roles and Responsibilities of the AMC Grand Chief as adopted July 31, 2019 be triggered for the removal of the Grand Chief under Article 7.6, and to conduct a removal procedure under Article 7.7 pursuant to Article 14 of the AMC Constitution.

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls has provided a "Master List of Report Recommendations" by theme. We urge the AMC to adopt all recommendations within the report, and focus attention on Themes 2 and 3 that address the coordination and cross-jurisdictional national action plan to address violence against Indigenous women and girls. Further, the recommendations call for the need for governments, including the AMC, to publicly acknowledge and condemn violence against Indigenous women and girls.

The mounting allegations and subsequent investigation by the Winnipeg Police Service into the conduct of Arlen Dumas in the context of his office of Grand Chief amounts to, in our opinion, a serious misconduct or neglect of duty under the AMC Constitution and Article 7.6 of the AMC Grand Chief Roles and Responsibilities of office.

We are aware and acknowledge the strength of the AMC's position in the organization's final presentation to the National Inquiry.

We had requested meetings with the Acting Grand Chief on March 31st and April 4th, 2022, respectively, in order to find a way to collectively support the victim(s) and those that have been traumatized by the revelations of new allegations of misconduct. The AMC does not honour the Constitution or the very women served by the governance and decision making of the Chiefs of Manitoba.

It is imperative that the AMC Chiefs be accountable and support victims of violence and sexualized violence. The women who have spoken out about the behavior of the Grand Chief are brave and deserve the support to heal from what is often a long, painful and silent journey. These women have now used their voices to address and condemn violence against Indigenous women and girls, and deserve a responsive, accountable and culturally appropriate response from leadership to address these issues.

We honour the sacredness of every painful story shared by the many family members, survivors of sexualized and racialized violence, 2SLGBTQQIA, and the experts who gave testimony during the National Inquiry into MMIWG. We further acknowledge the tenacious leadership of the National Inquiry Commissioners and Staff who persisted in their work and produced a final report that honours and reflects voices of immense courage and strength.

"First Nations Inuit and Metis women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people in Canada have been targets of violence for far too long. This truth is undeniable. The fact that a National Inquiry had to take place does not mean that Indigenous Peoples waited this long to speak up; it means it took Canada this long to listen." It also means that we require our Chiefs in Manitoba to be leaders.

The AMC spoke to instruments of change at the Inquiry. It is now time to show genuine leadership in honouring every feather of a headdress, and the voices of the victims who are brave to address the importance of upholding accountability, governance and leadership of office.

We urge you to consider the victims and engage in a process of discovery that is trauma-informed and reflective of good governance. Your decision and timely is of importance to all First Nations, Inuit and Metis in response and recompense.

Sincerely,