



# Carrier Sekani Tribal Council



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**"FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE"**

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## **The Persecution of Indigenous Women Must Stop: Carrier Sekani Tribal Chief, Mina Holmes**

(Unceded Territory of the Lheidli Tenn'eh, Prince George, BC – June 3, 2019) The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls released its *Reclaiming Power and Place: Final Report* this morning. This inquiry was made possible by the years of advocacy led by women in the communities who called on Canada to address the systemic and root causes of violence faced by Indigenous women and especially address the large number of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada.

Tribal Chief Mina Holmes, stated that "We want to recognize the courage and strength of the women who shared their stories. Their bravery and their trust in this process has become an opening for the possibility of monumental changes in our country. We also want to acknowledge the victim families for their ongoing support and advocacy" Chief Holmes is encouraged by the 231 recommendations and believes that the collaboration between all levels of government and the community need to continue in order to implement meaningful change. This is the time to rise above our past and finally address the systemic issues we face. This change must be a true partnership between First Nations, Communities, and all levels of government and Canadians.

The report uses the term genocide rather cultural genocide and that has been the topic of much of today's news regarding the Report. "Most importantly," Holmes said, "is the transformative change for Indigenous women in this country. The persecution of Indigenous women must stop and we must now begin a new journey of hope and promise. The National Action Plan must be implemented immediately in order to stop the ongoing genocide." Chief Commissioner Marion Buller said today in a television interview 'the change could start with simple, do-able things like providing drinking water in the Indigenous communities.'

The Commission Report also recommends that the Criminal Code of Canada be changed so that when an Indigenous women is murdered in a domestic violence case, that the criminal charge would automatically be first degree murder. Further the report states that the police force must change to include police sensitivity to properly serve and protect First Nations women. The police were reluctant to co-operate with the Commission in its requests for files on missing and murdered women.

If you need emotional assistance today, please call 1-844-413-6649. It is a toll free 24/7 crisis call line providing support for anyone who requires emotional assistance related to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

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