



Thematic Briefing – Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

For immediate release

(Ottawa) March 15, 2012 The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) and the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) announced today that they have been granted a hearing by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on the subject of the Disappearances and Murders of Aboriginal Women and Girls in British Columbia.

Jeannette Corbiere Lavell, President of the Native Women's Association of Canada, says "we are pleased to have this opportunity to discuss the human rights violations taking place in Canada with the members of the Inter-American Commission. One of the Rapporteurs for the Inter-American Commission investigated disappearances and murders in Ciudad Juarez. The Commission members are experts on the obligations of governments to protect women from violence."

Sharon McIvor, spokeswoman for the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action, says "The aim of our organizations is to seek the assistance of expert human rights bodies in the Inter-American and the United Nations systems so that we can bring an end to the violence in Canada and ensure that Aboriginal women and girls enjoy equal protection of the law."

NWAC and FAFIA have been assisted in preparation for this briefing by Caroline Bettinger-Lopez from the University of Miami Human Rights Clinic. Ms. Bettinger-Lopez was counsel in the case of Jessica Lenahan (formerly Gonzalez) against the United States, which was decided by the Inter-American Commission in August 2011, and related to the duties of the State to respond to situations of violence against women with diligent protection measures.

The hearing will take place on March 28 between 9 and 10 a.m. in the Padilha Vidal B room at the GSB Building of the Organizations of American States, in Washington D.C. The hearing will be live-streamed on the IACHR website at:

http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/coverage.asp. The schedule of hearings can be found at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2012/Calendar144eng.pdf

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