



News Release

For Immediate Release

A MANITOBA DELEGATION WILL PRESENT AT THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

March 7, 2017

Treaty One Territory, Winnipeg, MB

Following International Women's Day (March 8th), the Institute for International Women's Rights Manitoba (IIWR-MB) delegation will be hosting a parallel event during the sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women ([CSW61](#)) at the United Nations. The delegation's event titled "Risks for Canadian Indigenous Women Transitioning to an Urban Environment" will take place on March 13th, and will focus on the session's emerging theme "the Empowerment of Indigenous Women."

In July 2016, the IIWR-MB received Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, making it the first and only non-profit organization in Manitoba to have such a designation. It is with special status from the United Nations, that the IIWR-MB is able to send a delegation to the CSW61 and host a parallel event.

The IIWR-MB delegation is comprised of a number of Manitoba-based organizations who support the rights of women and are involved with the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. In keeping with the group's interests, their event aims to educate the global community and Canadian Government representatives about the challenges Indigenous women face, such as marginalization, poverty and exploitation, as well as share some of the community-driven solutions that are taking place.

The delegation has also informed the Government of Canada's Department of Status of Women and has invited them to attend the presentation. They will also be developing a report from the CSW61 that will be shared with key government officials for further engagement and action.

The delegation acknowledges and thanks Diane Redsky and Mary Scott whom have both coordinated the delegation's presentation at the CSW61. The delegation includes representatives from the following organizations: The University of Winnipeg Global College, The Institute for International Women's Rights - Manitoba (IIWR-MB), Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre Inc., Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO), Mitaanigamiing First Nation, Ndinawemaagang Endaawaad Inc. and the Southern Chiefs Organization Inc. (SCOINC).

Quotes

“As an Indigenous studies scholar, I am gratified to see this focus on the experiences of Indigenous women transitioning to an urban environment. At this point in Canadian history, the risks may seem to outweigh the benefits for Indigenous women as they are regularly the targets of structural, physical, and sexual violence.”

Julie Pelletier, PhD, Acting Executive Director - University of Winnipeg Global College

“As a small NGO from Canada, it is good to see we can support this remarkable delegation, taking their stories to the United Nations.” *Mary Scott, Board Member and co founder - The Institute for International Women’s Rights – Manitoba, Inc. (IIWR-MB)*

“I am honored and humbled to share the important small steps and giant strides we are making in community as a result of the commitment, perseverance and hope of the women and families we serve. Ma Mawi Chi Itata applies the knowledge of the wisdom keepers and an active community to address positive change as we reclaim our space in the global community.”

Margaret MacKinnon, Human Resources Coordinator - Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre Inc.

“This is an important opportunity to share with the global community what risks our women face when trying to empower themselves. Their safety, well-being and even lives are taken away from them and it is crucial that our government, society and communities address this now and together.”

Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO)

“As Chief of Mitaanijigamiing and as a proud Anishinaabekwe of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty 3 I believe it is so important to share our knowledge and our experiences with others. Together we are stronger and together we can make changes to improve the safety of our indigenous sisters across the globe.”

Chief Janice Henderson, Mitaanijigamiing First Nation, Grand Council Treaty 3

“Ensuring the health and wellness of Indigenous women is ensuring the health and wellness of our children, families and communities; the opportunities we create to empower Indigenous women today is an investment in our future.”

Tammy Christensen, Executive Director - Ndinawemaagang Endaawaad Inc.

“It is essential to highlight the issues our women face daily from social, and economic marginalization as well as racial stereotypes and discrimination. It is our duty as a nation to break down these barriers for our women to feel empowered.”

Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, Southern Chiefs Organization Inc. (SCOINC)

About the Partners

[Global College – University of Winnipeg](#)

The University of Winnipeg Global College fosters global citizenship and engagement in human rights through interdisciplinary teaching, research, dialogue, and action in local and global communities.

Global College provides students, faculty, staff, visiting scholars, and community leaders with ways to interact on their diverse perspectives about global citizenship, human rights, and other issues affecting local and global communities.

Institute for International Women's Rights – Manitoba, Inc. (IIWR-MB)

The Institute for International Women's Rights – Manitoba, Inc. is a relatively new organization, yet builds on the history and work of previous community groups, like UNIFEM and UN Women (Winnipeg Chapter), that worked to support women's equality and women's rights, locally and globally. Based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, IIWR-MB is founded to generate education, awareness, and action to promote women's human rights. IIWR-MB has Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and has registered the delegation of 15 members.

Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre Inc.

The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, Inc. (Ma Mawi) was given birth in the fall of 1984 by committed community members who sought an Indigenous solution to supporting and rebuilding families. Since that time, Ma Mawi has worked to support families to better care for children by creating meaningful opportunities for community and family involvement. Ma Mawi believes that strengthening families is a worthy investment in the future. Today Ma Mawi has over 50 programs, 11 sites, and 200+ staff and volunteers. Programs include community programs, youth programs, children-in-care programs as well as The Housing First Program.

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO)

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. is a non-profit, political advocacy organization that has represented 30 First Nation communities in Manitoba's North since 1981.

Mitaanjigamiing First Nation

Mitaanjigamiing First Nation is located in Northwestern Ontario at the arm of Rainy Lake, about 70 km north of the Town of Fort Frances. The reserve encompasses approximately 1600 hectares of land (18.27 square km), comprised of 14 sq.km of mainland, a peninsula and two islands. The community has approximately 140 registered people with 100 members living on reserve.

Ndinawemaagang Endaawaad Inc. (Ndinawe)

"Ndinawe" is a safe house that has been in existence since 1993. It was first created based on a community response to young Aboriginal women who were being exploited. It has now been expanded to offer different programs including educational and recreational programs. Its goal is to provide interconnected programming that is culturally appropriate to break the cycle of violence, poverty and isolation which exists with the youth in the community.

Southern Chiefs Organization Inc. (SCOINC)

The southern Chiefs of Manitoba established SCOINC to be an independent political forum to protect, preserve, promote and enhance First Nations peoples' inherent rights, languages, customs and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.

-30-

For more information, media may contact:

Mary Scott, Board Member

The Institute for International Women's Rights – Manitoba, Inc

info@iiwrmb.ca

Renata Meconse, Communications Officer
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO)
Renata.meconse@mkonorth.com
1-204-470-9320