CASW ACTS
Canadian Association of Social Workers
Association canadienne des travailleuses et travailleurs sociaux

383 avenue Parkdale Avenue,
Bureau/Suite 402
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1Y 4R4

T 613.729.6668
F 613.729.9608
casw@casw-acts.ca
www.casw-acts.ca

March 1, 2012

Madame Sylvia Pimentel, Chair
Members
United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
c/o CEDAW Secretariat
OHCHR - Palais Wilson, 8-14 Avenue de la Paix, CH-1211
Geneva 10, Switzerland

Dear Madame Pimentel and Members of the Committee,

The Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) is extremely pleased to learn that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has initiated an inquiry under Article 8 of the Optional Protocol into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. In this regard, CASW supports the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) in its appeal to the Committee to request a visit and come to Canada to conduct the inquiry as soon as possible.

Canada does not yet have in place a co-ordinated national plan, with detailed and concrete measures, to address the root causes and remedy the consequences of the violence against Aboriginal women and girls. Aboriginal girls and women are the most vulnerable populations of Canadian society as evidenced by that fact that, over the past decade, the number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women continues to increase.

CASW acknowledges and commends the Government of Canada for endorsing, in 2010, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, however ongoing issues of inequality for Aboriginal women in Canada demand action.

Canada must, in broad consultation with Aboriginal women and girls, commit to a national strategy for investigating the ongoing violence Aboriginal women experience across our nation. Without this, Canada will continue to completely fail in establishing an environment that empowers Aboriginal women and girls to reclaim and realize their full potential.

CASW echoes NWAC's request that the Committee seek permission for a visit to Canada in order that members undertaking the inquiry can speak directly with some Aboriginal women in Canada.

Respectfully,

Morel Caissie

Morel Caissie MSW, RSW
CASW President