



***For Immediate Release***

## **Anishinabek support UN attention on murdered and missing women**

UOI OFFICES (Nipissing First Nation) December 15, 2011 – Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee says that he applauds the United Nations attention on murdered and missing aboriginal women in Canada, but adds that it's a shame that we needed to bring in the UN to draw attention to the problem.

"It's shameful that we need an external agency to get the Canadian government's attention," says Grand Council Chief. "Our own citizens have been asking for months now. We needed action a long time ago."

The United Nations committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, composed of 23 independent experts from around the world, is the UN's main authority on women's human rights. Status of Women Minister Rona Ambrose said that Canada will be responding to a letter they received from the United Nations committee earlier this week.

Madahbee says that all along the response from law enforcement has been slow.

"The families of these victims are being victimized themselves by dismissive law enforcement and by government officials who just don't seem to care about this epidemic," says the Grand Council Chief.

"And it's not just women's human rights we're talking about here – it's the rights of all Indigenous Peoples," says Madahbee. "It has been voiced many, many times that if this happened to people from towns and cities across Canada, there would have been a swift response to the situation-- one just has to look at recent Federal response to crisis to see how our people are treated in our own land by our treaty partners - the Crown representing Canada."

Article 22 in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that it is Canada's responsibility to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.

The United Nations can open an investigation when it believes there have been "grave or systematic" violations of its conventions and the government involved is not seen to be actively resolving the issue.

The Anishinabek Nation established the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 39 member communities across Ontario, representing approximately 55,000 people. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.



*Anishinabek*

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