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## Assembly of First Nations

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## Assemblée des Premières Nations

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**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
JULY 11, 12, & 13, 2023; HALIFAX, NS**

**Resolution no. 67/2023**

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<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Denouncement of Manitoba Decision on Landfill Search for Remains of First Nations Women</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ Peoples
<b>MOVED BY:</b>	Chief Michelle Glasgow, Sipekne'katik (Shubenacadie) First Nation, NS
<b>SECONDED BY:</b>	Chief Annie Bernard-Daisley, We'koqma'q First Nation (Waycobah First Nation), NS
<b>DECISION</b>	Carried by Consensus

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**WHEREAS:**

- A.** The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:
- i. Article 7 (2): Indigenous peoples have the collective right to live in freedom, peace and security as distinct peoples and shall not be subjected to any act of genocide or any other act of violence, including forcibly removing children of the group to another group.
  - ii. Article 22 (2): States shall take measures, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, to ensure that indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.
- B.** The Government of Canada launched the independent National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (National Inquiry) which concluded in 2019 with the release of the National Inquiry's Final Report entitled Reclaiming Power and Place (Final Report).
- C.** The Final Report explores the many intersectional issues contributing to the national tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people and produced a supplementary report calling

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the tragedy a raced-based genocide of Indigenous Peoples that especially targets women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

- D.** The Final Report also contains 231 Calls for Justice, which includes:
- i.** Call for Justice 1.5: We call upon all governments to immediately take all necessary measures to prevent, investigate, punish, and compensate for violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.
  - ii.** Call for Justice 1.6: We call upon all governments to eliminate jurisdictional gaps and neglect that results in the denial of services, or improperly regulated and delivered services, that address the social, economic, political, and cultural marginalization of, and violence against, Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.
  - iii.** Call for Justice 9.5: We call upon all police services for the standardization of protocols for policies and practices that ensure that all cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are thoroughly investigated.
- E.** In December 2022, the Winnipeg Police Service informed the family members of Morgan Beatrice Harris and Mercedes Myran, as well as the public, that the women's remains will most likely be located in the Prairie Green Landfill, and a search would not be conducted.
- F.** Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran are among four (4) First Nations women believed to be victims of a serial killer. The other two First Nations women are Rebecca Contois, whose partial remains were discovered at the Brady Landfill, and an unidentified woman who was given the name Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe (Buffalo Woman).
- G.** On December 13, 2022, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), Long Plain First Nation, the Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO), the MMIWG2S+ Implementation Committee, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), and the Assembly of First Nations Manitoba Region agreed to pursue a feasibility study and jointly wrote a letter to Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Minister Hajdu, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs (CIRNA) Minister Miller, and Justice Canada Minister Lametti to request that they provide:
- i.** All the necessary resources needed to conduct a feasibility study on searching the Prairie Green Landfill and Brady Landfill;
  - ii.** All the necessary funding to cover the costs associated with the search and recovery of the First Nations women.
- H.** On May 12, 2023, AMC announced findings from the Landfill Search Feasibility Study Final Report, which determined that a search of the landfill is feasible and recovering the lost loved ones from Prairie Green Landfill

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can be done humanely. The search could take between 12-36 months and cost between \$84-million and \$184-million.

- I. On July 5, 2023, Manitoba Premier Heather Stefanson announced that the Province of Manitoba will not support a search of the Prairie Green Landfill, citing concerns of the health risk to workers and no guarantee that the remains would be found.
- J. On July 12, 2023, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Minister Marc Miller stated Canada is willing to help the Province of Manitoba and would continue to call on the province to work together on a potential search, however, there was no commitment for funding for the landfill search.
- K. Families and supporters in Manitoba have been leading peaceful social actions including a blockade of the Brady Landfill, which the City of Winnipeg is seeking a court injunction to disband the blockade, causing rising tensions in the region.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the First Nations-in-Assembly:**

- 1. Denounce the decisions of all levels of government, police, and law enforcement services across Canada that result in failures to adequately search for and/or recover the remains of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, including the decision of the Manitoba Provincial Government to not search the Prairie Green Landfill for the remains of the missing First Nations women murdered in Manitoba.
- 2. Call on the Manitoba Premier Heather Stefanson to reconsider the decision not to search the Prairie Green Landfill and work together with the Federal Government to conduct searches of both the Prairie Green Landfill and Brady Landfill.
- 3. Call on the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to advocate to the federal, provincial, and municipal governments for commitment to fund and support a thorough search of the Prairie Green Landfill and Brady Landfill for the remains of Morgan Beatrice Harris, Mercedes Myran, and Mashkode Bizhiki'ikwe (Buffalo Woman), and any other missing First Nations women.
- 4. Support the ongoing peaceful social actions at Manitoba landfills over the Government of Manitoba's decision not to search the Prairie Green Landfill and denounce and reject orders and injunctions from colonial courts that seek to remove these protestors.

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