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For Immediate Release

Justice for Girls Troubled by Expanded Breach of Aboriginal Women and Girls' Human Rights

Justice for Girls, a Vancouver based girls' rights organization, joins other groups in expressing concern over Health Canada's decision to cut all funding for the Native Women Association of Canada (NWAC) projects aimed at improving the health of Aboriginal women in Canada.

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination recently noted (March 2012) "the persistent marginalization and difficulties faced by [Aboriginal peoples in Canada] in respect of employment, housing, drinking water, health and education, as a result of structural discrimination whose consequences are still present."

As a result of this and other observations, many specific to the marginalization and oppression of Aboriginal women in Canada, the Committee urged the Canadian government to, among other things, facilitate access of Aboriginal peoples to health services as part of a revitalized general commitment to implement and reinforce existing government programmes for Aboriginal peoples.

The cut of all funding for NWAC's health programmes flies directly in the face of the concerns and recommendations of this committee of international human rights experts.

"This is an astonishing disregard for our international human rights obligations and for the need to focus more resources on the health of one of the most marginalized and impoverished groups in Canada," states Professor Margot Young, Faculty of Law, UBC and Board Member, Justice for Girls.

Justice for Girls urges the federal government to immediately restore full health funding to NWAC.

Justice for Girls is a non-profit society and registered charity, established in 1999, that promotes freedom from violence, justice, and equality for teenage girls who live in poverty. Justice for Girls works locally, nationally, and internationally to promote the rights of teen girls in Canada.

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