

The following is a summary of a hearing of the 173rd Period of Sessions at the Inter-American Commission on September 24, 2019. Several organizations participated at a hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to update the IACHR on the high rates of murder and large number of missing women and children among Canada's First Nations populations. Both the participating organizations and the state of Canada acknowledged that there is a problem concerning the missing and murdered women and girls. However, Canada is currently in an election period and must wait until October 2019 before taking more concrete action in accordance with the "Caretaker Convention." Francois Jubinville, representative for Canada, appreciated the courage of those who shared experiences with the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (National Inquiry), [1] published June 2019, and was at the hearing to observe and to issue a written statement at a later date. As of January 27, 2020, there has been no such official statement but there have been remarks about the government's work with the First Nations to create a national plan with the help of the Organization of American States. [2]

The high rate of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Canada is a result of political, economic, and social inequality dating back to colonialism. [3] In September of 2016, Canada began a two-year independent inquiry into the high rates of missing and murdered women and children. [4] The final report, known as the National Inquiry, is a compilation of testimonies from almost 2,400 individuals within a framework of Indigenous Rights. [5] Recently, Canada passed provisions to Bill S-3 eliminating a discriminatory provision in the Indian Act that revoked "Indian Status" from women who married a man without that status. [6] Bill S-3 reinstates 'Indian status' to those women and their children. This legislation came in response to the UNHRC case, *McIvor*

*v. Canada*, in which Sharon McIvor complained to the Human Rights Commission about the antiquated discriminatory legislation. At the hearing, McIvor and the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) argued that sex discrimination against First Nation women and girls under the Indian Act is a root cause of violence as found by IACHR, CEDAW, and the National Inquiry. [7] In previous reports, the IACHR expressed concern over the treatment of indigenous women and girls, including claims of forced sterilization and gender-based violence. [8] Canada also met with the IACHR during its 167th period of sessions to discuss the situation of Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. [9] The IACHR came to

State by acknowledging the important work of all the organizations present and recognized the strength of those who shared their stories with the inquiry. However, less than two weeks before this hearing, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called for a federal election for October 2019.[11] The Caretaker Convention in Canada calls for the current government to restrict itself from exercising its authority, besides routine,