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“The RCMP’s 2015 Update on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women fosters racism and discrimination” – Grand Chief Terrance Nelson

For Immediate Release June 25, 2015 (Winnipeg, Manitoba) - The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) has conducted a cursory review of the RCMP's *Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: 2015 Update to the National Operational Overview*. This update to the 2014 report, which had confirmed that 1,181 Aboriginal women have been victim to homicide or are missing over a 33 year period, added an additional 2 years of analysis which involves 11 more missing women.

SCO Grand Chief Terrance Nelson stated, “This report, just as the last, offers statistics, but not justice for hundreds of missing and murdered daughters, mothers, and sisters of Aboriginal community. The RCMP suggests that they are assisting communities under their jurisdictions with violence prevention strategies. A poster campaign will not solve the problem of violence inflicted on our people – both on and off-reserve.”

The 2015 update states, “Most women, regardless of ethnicity, are being killed in their homes and communities, by men known to them, be it a former or present spouse, or family member.” It continues “Offenders were known to their victims in 100% of solved homicide cases of Aboriginal women...” The update connects these homicides with a strong link to family violence.” The update report does not identify the ethnicity of perpetrators, but it is clearly intended to place the blame upon Aboriginal peoples themselves.

These statements, only serve to bolster racist comments and attitudes that are held by the general population. The update supports comments which were made by Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt, in March 2015, “that 70% of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal women are victims of violence by Aboriginal men”.

“Canada has condemned other nations for their mistreatment of women including Nigeria and Iran. The root problems in First Nations communities need to be addressed. First Nations are at the 72nd level of the United Nations Human Development Index, with between 60 to 95% unemployment. The updated report attempts to blame First Peoples for the despair and violence; the reality is the undeclared economic sanctions imposed upon them as a result of the Canadian Indian Act” stated Grand Chief Nelson.

The SCO mailed the 2014 RCMP report to all Embassies in Ottawa. The update report is an attempt to provide the Government of Canada with some “outs” when it is questioned by other Nations and international Human Rights organizations. The RCMP update is a classic example of “blaming the victim”.

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