

## **Press Release by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning the inquiry regarding disappearances and murders of aboriginal women and girls in Canada**

Press releases are currently circulating indicating that the Committee has taken a decision to undertake an inquiry with respect to disappearances and murders of aboriginal women and girls in Canada. The Committee would like to clarify the situation. At its fiftieth session held in October 2011, based upon information received, it decided to **initiate** an inquiry procedure under article 8 of the Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In accordance with article 8(1) of the Optional Protocol and the Rule 83 of the Rules Procedure of the Committee, if the Committee receives reliable information indicating grave or systematic violations by a State party of rights set forth in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Committee is required to invite the State party concerned to cooperate in the examination of information received, which may include information from Government representatives, governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, individuals and the United Nations system, and to submit observations with regard to such information.

The inquiry procedure may also include a visit to the territory of Canada, if warranted and agreed to by the Canadian Government, in accordance with article 8(2) of the Optional Protocol. The Committee has not yet decided whether it will conduct a visit at this initial stage of the process, and is currently not in a position to provide additional information in this regard.

The Committee would also like to note that inquiries are confidential and the cooperation of the Government of Canada will be sought at all stages of the process.

For more information on the Committee, inquiry procedures under article 8 of the Optional Protocol and Rules of Procedure of the Committee, please refer to the CEDAW webpage (under Human Rights bodies) available on the website of OHCHR (<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/>).