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Youth from Skownan First Nation to Protest at Legislature

Nishnawbe Aski Nation police departments in state of emergency

Tribal jurisdiction with gender parity

RCMP dismissing claims of rape, abuse by officers on Aboriginal women

Calling All Youth Gamers: Contest for Original Video Games Now Open

The Peace First Prize

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<http://www.chrisd.ca/2013/02/21/skownan-first-nation-bill-c-45-protest-manitoba-legislative-building/>

Youth from Skownan First Nation to Protest at Legislature
February 21, 2013 07:01 AM in [News](#)

Manitoba Legislative Building

A group of 15 youth from the Skownan First Nation will arrive in Winnipeg today to protest against Bill C-45.

Led by 15-year-old **Victor Thomas**, the delegation left their community on February 15 to make the 320 kilometre journey along Highway 6 to the city.

Skownan youth are most concerned on what the piece of federal legislation means to Canadian waterways, lakes and rivers, and environmental protection.

“These young people, showing great leadership and bravery, should be commended for doing their part in protecting Mother Earth,” said Skownan First Nation Chief **Cameron Catchway**.

The group will arrive on the steps of the Manitoba legislature at 2 p.m. – Staff

<http://aptn.ca/pages/news/2013/02/20/nishnawbe-aski-nation-police-departments-in-state-of-emergency/>

Nishnawbe Aski Nation police departments in state of emergency

By Kenneth Jackson

APTN National News

After a 23-year-old woman committed suicide in the back of a police cruiser earlier this month the Nishnawbe Aski Nation has put the Ontario coroner’s office on notice that the police force is in “severe jeopardy”.

The northern Ontario First Nation wrote Chief Coroner Dan Cass Tuesday. [The five-page letter obtained by APTN National News](#) outlines the problems facing the Nishnawbe Aski Police Service (NAPS).

The letter comes a few weeks after Lena Anderson died in the back of a police cruiser on Feb. 1. Anderson killed herself after she was put in the car because there was no heat in the Kasabonika Lake detachment where she was detained.

It’s one of 35 remote communities policed by NAN.

“Sadly, this death is reflective of a larger frightening reality – NAN’s communities have been put in grave jeopardy because of the federal and provincial government’s decision to chronically underfund NAPS,” said the letter co-signed by Grand Chief Harvey Yesno and Frank McKay, chair of the Nishnawbe police board.

Yesno and McKay said their police force doesn’t get the same level of service as say the Ontario Provincial Police.

The letter was also sent to the federal and provincial governments. NAPS is the largest First Nation police force in Canada with 134 uniformed officers and 30 civilians.

NDP MP Charlie Angus represents the area and said the death is the latest in a “series of horror stories” facing the underfunded police department that is working in third-world conditions.

“We have police officers working with no back-up and sleeping in places where you wouldn’t let a dog sleep. We have prisoners being held in the back seats of cars or in makeshift jails where they face risk of either fire or freezing,” said Angus in a statement. “The NAPS officers are being forced to work in conditions that no other police unit in Canada would accept. Why the double standard?”

Angus has been outspoken of the poor conditions of northern First Nations.

He said it’s political and points the blame at Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

He said the Nishnawbe Aski police get 52 per cent of its funding from the feds. The province kicks in the rest.

“The Conservatives talk loudly about being tough on crime and providing safe communities. Yet they are leaving northern citizens and First Nation police to put up with third world conditions. This situation is unacceptable,” he said.

The OPP were asked to look in the Anderson's death but found it wasn't a criminal matter according to reports.

According to the letter, there are more problems than just underfunding of the "appalling detachments".

Promises haven't been kept since the Kashechewan Inquest in May 2009 that looked into the 2006 deaths of two men who burned to death in a makeshift jail cell in Kashechewan First Nation.

There were seven communities that were designated to receive new modular units but only one community has so far.

"In fact, evidence heard at the Kashechewan Inquest demonstrated that there were at least 19 (police) detachments that did not meet the national building code and did not have sprinkler systems," the letter said.

As a result, there are a number of communities relying on "unsafe" detachments.

"Simply put, accounting has put First Nation lives at risk," said the letter.

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<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/02/201322010564641929.html>

Tribal jurisdiction with gender parity

Native women's decision-making processes must be empowered by not only ending racism, but also sexism.

At least 86 percent of reported cases of rape or sexual assault against Native women are by non-Native men [Reuters]

Tribal demands are holding up the reauthorisation of the landmark Violence Against Women Act in the United States Congress. Apparently, conservative Republican congressmen cannot agree whether to allow Native American courts to prosecute non-Indians who rape women on tribal land. Yet every new report confirms what we already know: that Native women are victims of widespread [abuse](#) and their access to justice is extremely limited. In fact, more often than not, the justice system itself is the problem.

The extent of violence against Native and Indigenous women is as horrifying as the impunity that permits it. The United Nations has repeatedly stressed the multiple forms of discrimination that Indigenous women face, with various reports from the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. And North America is far from immune to this trend, as various reports have repeatedly demonstrated.

Unless the US Congress wants to countenance the continued violation of Native women's rights, it must quickly [grant](#) the tribal authority demanded. And if tribes are serious about protecting women rights, they should go the extra step to guarantee women's decision-making power in the administration of justice on tribal land. If in doubt, they may look south for inspiration.

Violence against Native women in North America

Native women are abused and murdered in unacceptably large numbers in North America. In the US, the rates of violence against Native women are two and half times higher than for any other population, and it is mostly committed by outsiders. According to the US Department of

Justice, at least 86 percent of the reported cases of rape or sexual assault against Native women are committed by non-Native men.

Amnesty International produced an in-depth report on the issue, "[The Maize of Injustice](#)", explaining how jurisdictional loopholes make it difficult, if not impossible, to address sexual assault efficiently. Complex legal arrangements created by the US federal government impede tribes from prosecuting non-Native men who commit crimes on tribal territory, thereby leaving women unprotected and giving impunity to the rapists.

Witness

Burden of Silence

In 2011, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights organised an unprecedented hearing to examine how US policies have created a human rights crisis for Native women. Native women [testified](#) on the epidemic of violence, forcing US government representatives to admit that the level of violence against Native women is "an assault on the national conscience" and that much more must be done to protect them.

Such systematic violence has been disclosed in Canada as well. A recent Human Rights Watch [report](#) sheds greater light on the missing Native women of British Columbia. The 95-page detailed report on Canada's Highway of Tears, a 724 kilometre road where too many Native girls and women have been murdered, shows that oftentimes police officers themselves are the abusers. It's not only that police authorities have demonstrated decades of apathy in solving women disappearances, mind you. The report charges that officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have been guilty of raping Native women, beaten hand-cuffed girls they were called to help, and that physical assaults are often accompanied by verbal racist abuse.

The HRW report's title, "Those Who Take Us Away", is a literal translation of the word for police in the Carrier language, which is spoken in many indigenous communities in northern British Columbia. There, as in so many Indigenous communities around the world, the police are not perceived as a source of help but feared for the violence they inflict. The last thing a Native woman in danger does is to call the police.

According to the [Native Women Association of Canada](#), there are currently about twenty Native women and girls murdered annually. If transposed to non-Native women, this rate would mean that about 18,000 Canadian women would have gone missing since the late 1970s.

Tribal authority to counter state injustice

North American judicial systems are grossly failing Native women. It is urgent that independent inquiries bring justice to the crimes committed and that police training and new rules be implemented, as recommended by HRW. It is also high time for the US and Canada to ratify the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women, otherwise known as the [Convention of Belém do Pará](#). Yet such systematic violence has deeper roots.

Violence against Native women is an acute expression of the larger violence against Indigenous Peoples. The colonisation of the Americas, as argued by [Andrea Smith](#), was largely made through the conquest of women's bodies. The trend continues, and sexual assault on Native women echoes the disregard for Indigenous authority at large, from self-government to tribal sovereignty over land and resources.

The main problem is the continuing colonial violence of the state, as the [Idle No More](#) movement has been shouting quite loudly. The legal system is perhaps where exclusion is best enforced. Rules are made by and for sovereign states. Indigenous peoples, who have been

historically excluded as the "uncivilised" who did not belong to the "modern" nation-state, have not participated in the making of the rules. Even when tribes and governments came to agreements, North American colonial powers abrogated legal treaties whenever they deemed necessary. Tribes distrust states and know that governments are the last place to seek protection.

This is why tribes in the US are trying to protect women by ensuring tribal jurisdiction. The [Save Native Women Act](#) proposes to include key tribal provisions in the Violence Against Women Act reauthorisation. The provisions, passed in the Senate and pending approval in the House of Representatives, would restore tribal jurisdiction to prosecute non-Native men who abuse women in Indian country.

Securing women decision-making power in making justice

Securing tribal authority to prosecute crimes against women is an important step, but it probably will be insufficient to bring justice to women. As we recognise the racist violence of the state, we cannot turn a blind eye to the sexist violence present across Native societies. In addition to rapes by non-Native men, domestic violence within native families is also rampant and physical [abuse](#) widespread.

Violence against Native women is so extreme because it is located at the intersection of racism and sexism. *Solving only one part of the equation is not enough.* If it is important to expand tribal jurisdiction, it is equally crucial to make women fully equal decision-makers in the administration of justice.

That is precisely what Kichwa Indigenous women have done in Ecuador. Tired of being stuck between racist state justice and sexist indigenous justice, they called for gender parity clauses within collective rights. They invoked international women's rights encompassed in the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women](#) and the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) to claim their right to participate in the management of justice. But instead of only demanding a voice in the state system, they have also sought to transcend local justice by strengthening indigenous justice with international women's rights.

The result is a modern legal arrangement that requires autonomous systems of indigenous justice to assure compliance with international norms of human and women rights. Article 171 on Indigenous Justice in Ecuador's 2008 [Constitution](#) recognises indigenous justice on the provision that: "the authorities of indigenous communities, peoples and nationalities will exercise judicial functions based on their ancestral traditions... within its territory, guaranteeing the participation and decision of women."

Tribes are extremely diverse, with over 800 cultures and nationalities in the US alone. Some tribes may be led by women, like the Six Nations of the Iroquois Nations, yet oftentimes they sideline women from political decision-making. If we are serious about giving justice to Native women we must, first and foremost, put the instruments of law in their hands.

Native women will be better protected by tribal law. They will be even better off when other Native women are half the police, prosecutors, and judges in tribal jurisdiction. In fact, that would be a good idea to protect non-Native women across all justice systems.

Manuela Picq has just completed her time as a visiting professor and research fellow at Amherst College.

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial policy.

*****<http://aptn.ca/pages/news/2013/02/20/rcmp-dismissing-claims-of-rape-abuse-by-officers-on-aboriginal-women-human-rights-watch/>

[RCMP dismissing claims of rape, abuse by officers on Aboriginal women: Human Rights Watch](#)

National News | 20. Feb, 2013 by [APTN National News](#) | [0 Comments](#)

Watch video at <http://aptn.ca/pages/news/2013/02/20/rcmp-dismissing-claims-of-rape-abuse-by-officers-on-aboriginal-women-human-rights-watch/>

APTN National News

This is a story that made headlines across the country last week.

An international human rights organization released a report on the RCMP with allegations of abuse by their officers on Aboriginal women and girls, including a woman saying she was gang-raped on a number of occasions. She said police threatened to kill her if she said anything.

Now, Human Rights Watch says the RCMP is dismissing their research that involved hours of field and interviewing dozens of people.

This comes after the organization travelled to Vancouver to meet with province's top RCMP brass.

APTN National News reporter **Rob Smith** has the story.

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Calling All Youth Gamers: Contest for Original Video Games Now Open *Sponsorship of National STEM Video Game Challenge by IMLS puts libraries and museums into play*

Washington, DC—The annual [National STEM Video Game Challenge](#), presented by the [Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop](#) and [E-Line Media](#) opens today for student submissions of original video games and game designs. The National STEM Video Game Challenge, now in its third year, was inspired by President Obama's "[Educate to Innovate Campaign](#)," an initiative promoting science, technology, engineering and math education.

As a new national community Challenge sponsor, IMLS will expand opportunities for libraries and museums to support Challenge participation in their communities. Youth gaming workshops, run by E-Line Media, will occur at 20 museum and library locations throughout the United States. IMLS recognizes the value of museums and libraries as strong community anchor institutions with the requisite staff, technology, and facilities in place to serve as ideal venues to sponsor youth creativity, mentoring, and learning in game design.

"For museums and libraries, participation in the STEM Video Challenge is a natural fit," said IMLS director Susan Hildreth. "The Challenge ties into our goal to support libraries and museums that make a difference on issues of national concern. Our institutions have deep experience providing opportunities for teens to gain 21st century skills and participating in the STEM Video Challenge encourages creativity, systems thinking and problem solving."

Workshop Events and Online Resources

With support from IMLS, the [Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop](#) and E-Line Media will develop tools and dynamic online museum- and library-specific content to expand the capacity of these institutions to help students create games and participate in the Challenge.

The first 19 workshops have been confirmed at the following locations and times.

- February 23, 2013: 1:30-4:30pm, Philadelphia, PA
The Free Library of Philadelphia (Parkway Central Library)
- March 2, 2013: 1:30-5:30pm, Rogersville, TN
Hawkins Public Library
- March 6: IMLS Webwise Meeting – Teacher workshop, Baltimore, MD
Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace
- March 9, 2013: 1-4pm, Thornton, CO
Rangeview Library District's Anythink Wright Farms
- March 10, 2013: 1-4pm, Orlando, FL
Orlando Science Center
- March 11, 2013: 10:30am-1:30pm, Orlando, FL
Orange County Library System (Downtown Branch)
- March 11, 2013: 6-8pm, Winter Garden, FL
Orange County Library System (Winter Garden Branch)
- March 14, 2013: 5-7pm, Lynn, MA
Lynn Public Library
- March 15, 2013: 2:30-5:30pm, Cranston, RI
Cranston Public Library
- March 16, 2013: 2-5pm, Providence, RI
Providence Community Library's Rochambeau Public Library
- March 16, 2013: 12-3pm, Oakland, CA
Oakland Public Library, 81st Avenue Branch
- March 19, 2013: 3-6pm, Rochester, NY
Rochester Public Library
- March 21, 2013: 12:30-4pm, East Orange, NJ
STEM Academy
- March 22, 2013: 6-9pm, Tucson, AZ
PIMA County Public Library
- March 23, 2013: 10am-2pm, Seattle, WA
Museum of History and Industry
- March 23, 2013: 12-3pm, Las Vegas, NV
Sahara West Library

- March 26, 2013: 4-8pm, Independence, KS
Independence Public Library
- March 30, 2013: 10am-2pm, Phoenix, AZ
Arizona Science Center
- April 1, 2013: 8:30am-12:30pm, Columbia, MD
(8:30-9:30am is instructors' intro – 9:30-12:30 is youth workshop)
Howard County Public Library

Check the [Game Design Workshop page](#) of the Challenge website frequently to see updates and details for these events. The new 2013 [National STEM Challenge website](#) also features a mentor resource kit, a hands-on workshop guide, webinars for museum and library staff, news and resources on game design and STEM skills, and information on STEM Challenge events.

Contest Details and Prizes

The 2013 [National STEM Video Game Challenge](#) is accepting entries from U.S. students in grades five through twelve, **through April 24, 2013**. Students can enter as individuals or in teams of up to four students. Entries can be created using any game-making platform such as [Gamestar Mechanic](#), [Microsoft's Kodu](#), [GameMaker](#), [Scratch](#), or a written game design concept document.

Each individual winner and each member of a winning team will receive an AMD-powered laptop computer that will include game design and educational software. The winners' sponsoring school or an organization of their choice will receive a cash prize of \$2000.

In 2012 more than 3,700 middle and high school youth participated in the Challenge, a 650 percent increase over its inaugural year. Twenty-eight youth were selected as winners last year and two winners from the inaugural year of the competition were invited to showcase their games at the [White House Science Fair](#) in February 2012.

For this year's Challenge, IMLS is joining returning title sponsors the [AMD Foundation](#), [Microsoft's Xbox 360](#), the [Entertainment Software Association](#), new national community sponsor the [Hive Digital Media Learning Fund in The New York Community Trust](#), and national outreach partners [BrainPOP](#), the [Corporation for Public Broadcasting PBS KIDS Ready To Learn Initiative](#), [Learning Game Network](#) and [Edmodo](#).

The Peace First Prize is more than just a competition to find outstanding young people; it is about building a broad-based engagement platform to inspire, celebrate, and connect young people who are making a real difference in creating more peaceful and just communities.

At a time when young people are overwhelmingly seen as problems, we hope to spark a national conversation about the power young people have to be positive change-makers. The Prize will introduce youth peacemaking as a powerful concept to Americans across the country, engaging them as nominees, nominators, educators and parents.

The Peace First Prize will celebrate small, courageous and transformative acts of peacemaking by young people and inspire others to follow in their footsteps. We envision offering the Prize

annually to youth aged 8-22 living in the United States. Peace First will invest in the long-term ability of winners to become national peace leaders. Winners will be awarded a \$50,000 Peace First Fellowship over two years. The fellowship includes a customized curriculum, and individual coaching, networking, and mentoring from prominent business and community leaders.

How are Winners Selected?

Leveraging key partners, the Prize will issue a call to unearth thousands of nominations through: a national media campaign, national nonprofits, Ambassadors, and tool-kits. First round applications will be evaluated by Peace First staff based on the nominee's peacemaking work in meeting stated criteria that include compassion, courage and ability to promote collaborative change. The Prize Screening Committee will narrow the pool of second-round applicants to help identify the finalists. A small group of distinguished and high-profile leaders will then interview the finalists and endorse a group of 5-10 winners to the Peace First Board of Directors for approval.

Who are our Partners?

A number of committed individuals and groups have signed on to amplify the Peace First Prize and activate young people.

Ambassadors:

Leading our group of Ambassadors for the Peace First Prize is our national spokesperson: **America Ferrera** (Ugly Betty) America is joined by a wonderful group of Ambassadors that include:

Rashida Jones, Peace First Board Member (Parks and Recreation), **Vera Farmiga** (Up in the Air, Source Code), **Jesse Ferguson** (Modern Family), **Ian Harding** (Pretty Little Liars), **Debra Messing** (Smash, Will and Grace), **Amy Poehler** (Parks and Recreation), **Rosie Perez** (Fearless), **Mark Ruffalo** (Avengers, The Kids are All Right), **Andy Samberg** (Saturday Night Live), **Peter Sarsgaard** (Green Lantern), **Sofia Vassilieva** (Eloise, My Sister's Keeper), **Sofia Vergara** (Modern Family)

Presenting Nominators: We have partnered with 13 national organizations, representing over 45 million young people:

4-H

America's Promise Alliance

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Boys & Girls Clubs of America

Campus Compact

City Year

Communities in Schools

generationOn

Girl Scouts

*Mentor
Teach for America
American Association of School Administrators
American Federation of Teachers.*

Join Us!

[Click here](#) to get involved and partner with us on this powerful initiative, we can use you on our team.

When (what year -- if ever) do you think the paper based book will be a "novelty"?



[American Indian and Alaska Native Poverty Rate About 50 Percent in Rapid City, S.D., and About 30 Pe](#)

www.census.gov

[American Indian and Alaska Native Poverty Rate About 50 Percent in Rapid City, S.D., and About 30 Percent in Five Other Cities, Census Bureau Reports](#)