



FOR RELEASE #07-135
June 27, 2007

TERRITORIES DISAPPOINTED BY FEDERAL FAMILY VIOLENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

WHITEHORSE – Northern Ministers responsible for the Status of Women are disappointed with the recent federal announcement of an additional \$56 million over five years for family violence prevention programs and services on *Indian Act* reserves.

In the North, “on reserve”, a concept arising from the *Indian Act*, has next to no application. There are no reserves in Nunavut, none to which the *Indian Act* applies in the Yukon, and only two *Indian Act* reserves in the Northwest Territories.

The announcement was made by federal Status of Women Minister Bev Oda at the National Aboriginal Women’s Summit, in Corner Brook, NL, on behalf of the Ministers of Indian and Northern Affairs and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

“We do not doubt the federal government’s sincere interest in reducing the level of violence against Aboriginal women in Canada and increasing the number of shelters available to them when escaping a violent relationship,” Charles Dent, NWT Minister responsible for the Status of Women. “It is difficult to understand, however, why yet again the North is excluded from these much-needed resources.”

In 2006, the increase in federal funding to women’s shelters located on *Indian Act* reserves also excluded northern Aboriginal women. At the time, the three northern Ministers responsible for the Status of Women wrote to the Hon. Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, requesting redress of the situation, to no avail.

“Unfortunately, once again, women in the North will benefit very little from this additional funding,” Yukon Minister responsible for the Women’s Directorate Elaine Taylor said. “This is particularly difficult to understand since women in the North experience a greater level of violence, and of a greater severity, than do women in the south.”

“Aboriginal women in the North are in desperate need of the kind of help the federal government is offering to “on reserve” women only,” Nunavut Minister responsible for the Status of Women Leona Aglukkaq added. “It’s high time the federal government reflected the realities of the North by adapting its policies to acknowledge and respond to the needs of northern Aboriginal women.”

.../2

The Territorial Ministers responsible for the Status of Women will continue to advocate on behalf of Northern women on these concerns.

-30-

Contact:

Yukon:

Roxanne Vallevand
Communications Advisor
Cabinet Office (867) 633-7949
roxanne.vallevand@gov.yk.ca

Northwest Territories:

Brad Poulter
Cabinet Communications
Government of the Northwest Territories
(867) 669-2302
brad_poulter@gov.nt.ca

Nunavut :

Rian van Bruggen
Senior Program Specialist, Women's Initiatives
Department of Health and Social Services
Phone: (867) 975-5782
rvanbruggen@gov.nu.ca