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The Government of Ontario is troubled by the high rate of violence against Aboriginal women, which in Canada is triple that of non-Aboriginal women (Statistics Canada, 2006). We recognize that violence against Aboriginal women is a complex problem and as such, it is a priority to collaborate with key partners to provide the necessary services and assistance to victims of violence and work to prevent violence from starting in the first place.

In November 2007, the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) and the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA), two key provincial Aboriginal organizations which advocate for the economic and social well-being of Aboriginal women and families, released *A Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women*. The *Framework* contains strategic directions warranting government action to respond to violence and related issues of unique concern to Aboriginal women.

The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues are leading the government's response to the framework, which sets out recommendations in key areas of research, legislation, policy, program, education, community development, leadership and accountability measures. Ontario has endorsed the overall objectives and multi-faceted approach of the *Framework* as a useful tool for planning and priority setting.

The Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, the Ontario Women's Directorate and many other ministries are working in partnership with Aboriginal leaders, organizations and communities to find the most effective ways to prevent and end violence against Aboriginal women. The enclosed *Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women* document is informative, revealing, and useful in understanding and responding to the distinct and complex challenges that Aboriginal women are facing. Public education is key to raising awareness of violence against Aboriginal women and to make ending violence against Aboriginal women our mutual priority; we are distributing free copies of this important document to organizations in the social service sector, Ontario ministries, and agencies.

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We would greatly appreciate your assistance to ensure copies of the *Framework* are distributed within your organization, program and service areas, and within communities across Ontario. Please contact Delaney Waddell at the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs if you require additional copies of this document. Delaney Waddell can be reached by email at delaney.waddell@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your efforts to distribute this information and to help end violence against Aboriginal women.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deborah Richardson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Deborah" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Richardson".

Deborah Richardson
Assistant Deputy Minister
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Enclosure