

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER TO RECLAIM POWER AND PLACE

Friday June 21, 2019



On this National Indigenous Peoples Day, we are at a critical moment in Canada's history. On June 3, 2019, we released a comprehensive report, *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, that documents the truths of more than 2,380 family members, survivors of violence, experts and Knowledge Keepers, shared over two years of cross-country hearings and evidence gathering.

The heart and voice of this report belongs to families and survivors, who ache for their lost sisters, aunts, daughters, mothers and grandmothers. This heartache now belongs to all of us. We are all accountable, and we must turn that into real and tangible actions. We are often asked, what can we do? How can we get started on such a monumental task? These are good questions. There are things we can do immediately, both big and small, as a country, as community members, and as individuals.

The federal government has accepted our Call for Justice to create a National Action Plan with Indigenous people at the table to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. That work can begin immediately. We also call on all provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous governments to develop action plans in their jurisdictions, and some have already started to do so. As voters, we can make sure elected leaders know what is important to us and what we expect of them.

Families and survivors want clear answers about what happened to their loved ones. We need an independent, national Police Task Force established that is able to re-open investigations and delve deeper into the cases of missing and murdered women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This work could also start immediately.

Our Final Report also includes Calls for Justice for the media and social influencers, health and wellness service providers, police services, lawyers and law societies, educators, social workers, those involved in child welfare, and for extractive and development industries and for Correctional Service Canada.

As individuals, we need to decolonize ourselves by learning the true history of Canada. June is National Indigenous History Month, and we call on all institutions and educators to understand and teach the reality of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, and explore the root causes of violence. In addition to the Final Report and resources noted within it, the National Inquiry developed *Their Voices Will Guide Us* in collaboration with Indigenous educators. A guide for students of all ages, it provides key resources around the issue of violence against First Nations, Métis, and Inuit women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. We invite everyone to access this free resource at <http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/publications/>.

Each of us needs to stand up and become a strong ally. We must confront and speak out against racism, sexism, ignorance, homophobia, and transphobia, wherever and whenever we witness it, and teach or encourage others to do the same, in our workplace, in social settings, and everywhere else. Create time and space for relationships based on respect as human beings, supporting and embracing differences with kindness, love, and respect.

This National Indigenous Peoples Day, let's resolve to create a new future together. Restoring safety for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people is an urgent responsibility for us all. Let's get to it.

Kinana'skomitinnow-ow

Marion Buller
Chief Commissioner

Tshinashkumitnau

Michèle Audette
Commissioner

Chi-meegwetch

Brian Eyolfson
Commissioner

Nakurmiik

Qajaq Robinson
Commissioner