



Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) Calls to Individuals, Communities and Systems to Work in Unity Towards Change

Ottawa, ON – June 3, 2019 Today Canada received the much-anticipated National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Final Report, [Reclaiming Power and Place](#).

ONWA acknowledges the families that have chosen to participate in this process and those who have not. “We need to begin to look at how we work together, we need to rebuild our relationships as agencies, community members and systems. We need change now,” stated ONWA Executive Director Cora McGuire-Cyrette. ONWA has seen how effective holistic strength-based services, combined with Indigenous ways of knowing and being are in providing wrap around services to Indigenous women and families which mirrors many of the recommendations within the Inquiry Final Report.

ONWA has recognized a direct connection between Indigenous women, girls, and two spirit people and human trafficking as outlined in its [Journey to Safe SPACES: Indigenous Anti- Human Trafficking Engagement Report](#). ONWA's work in communities across Ontario is congruent with The Principles for Change within the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry Final Report. This provides guidance and direction placing cultural safety at the centre of “self-determined and Indigenous led solutions and services.”

As stated by ONWA board president Dawn Lavell-Harvard, “ONWA is committed to ending violence against Indigenous women, rooted in a long legacy of colonialism that has diminished the value of Indigenous women, girls, and two spirit people in this country. The best way we can remember the value of those missing or murdered is to put an end to the conditions, attitudes, behaviours and systems that have caused this devastating situation.”

More time is needed to read the report and to connect with families. We will include the Elders that help guide this work so that we can continue to support families of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. This report is only the beginning, honouring the lives of MMIWG requires us to move forward, together.

Moving forward in a good way, building relationships and implementing healing programs are necessary to continue this work that the National Inquiry has highlighted. The Ontario Native Women's Association calls for unity across families, communities and nations to create safety for Indigenous women at the grassroots level, now is the time for reclaiming Indigenous women's voice within the circle.

To read:

- Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls – <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>
- Journey to Safe SPACES: Indigenous Anti- Human Trafficking Engagement Report – <http://www.onwa.ca/upload/documents/onwa-iaht-liaisons-project-report-2017-2.pdf>

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