



# SHINING THE SPOTLIGHT

NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF CANADA NEWSLETTER



**NEW INITIATIVES**  
ISSUE 19 • DEC/JAN





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LYNNE  
GROULX

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

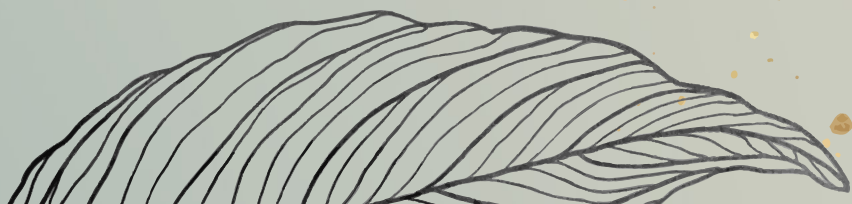
The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls called the crisis that has devastated Indigenous communities across the country a cultural genocide. It issued 231 individual Calls for Justice that are designed to redress the wrongs wrought by colonial and patriarchal policies and practices. Colonialism displaced Indigenous women from their traditional roles in communities and governance and diminished their status in society, leaving them vulnerable to violence.

As the association that represents Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse+ (WG2STGD+) people across this country, one of our main focuses has been, and continues to be, the violence prevention and promoting the safety of Indigenous WG2STGD+ people. In this issue of *Shining the Spotlight*, you're read about our continuing work in this area, such as the partnerships and engagements that are taking place on matters related to this file.

For example, our MMIWG2S+ team is engaging with the RCMP and the federal MMIWG Secretariat on the Red Dress Alert system and other mechanisms for reporting missing Indigenous WG2STGD+ people. Everyone has a role to play in addressing gender inequality, promoting safety and security for all, and building trust and accountability.

To this end, the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) released our own action plan, titled *Our Calls, Our Action*. The 66 concrete actions in our plan—which we aim to complete—address violence against Indigenous WG2STGD+ people and promote their safety and security.

Healing and wellness is a big part of the safety piece. In addition to healing lodges, Indigenous-led healing and wellness initiatives such as healing lodges are critical. Our Executive Policy team is researching initiatives that are land-based and Elder-led—gathering information on the transformative power of integrating Indigenous perspectives into mainstream health care.







When it comes to talking about wellness, NWAC continues to work hard on the overincarceration of Indigenous women file. It's a human rights travesty that Indigenous women make up more than half of all federal prison populations: the women who are incarcerated face trauma, poverty, abuse, and a host of injustices—like a lack of access to supportive services—that trample on their dignity and negatively impact their health. A story in this issue brings you up to date on our advocacy work in this important area. (And if you haven't already done so, I urge you to read our latest issue of *Kci-Niwesq*, whose theme is injustice.)

Our Health team is working on a project on medical assistance in dying and its impact on the people that NWAC represents. The overall goal is to promote culturally competent approaches to end-of-life care for Indigenous WG2STGD+ individuals.

Economic empowerment was identified by the National Inquiry as a key driver for addressing the wrongs that Indigenous women have faced as a result of colonialism. And so, as usual, we bring you a fulsome update on the Community Workforce Development Program, #BeTheDrum, and POETA. They are very different pathways but they all share the same goal—to help Indigenous WG2STGD+ individuals achieve career success.

We bring you a story about our Going Global initiative, which is aimed at enhancing the social, economic, cultural, and political well-being of Indigenous WG2STGD+ people worldwide. We're undertaking cultural exchanges, holding "fireside chats" on trade and export opportunities, and participating in government discussions with organizations dedicated to women and gender equality.

Last but not least, NWAC was ably represented at COP28 in Dubai, which presented multiple opportunities to meet with delegates, including the Canadian Ambassador of Climate Change and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change; take part in an Indigenous caucus; and help open the Canadian and Indigenous pavilions. Our story takes you behind the scenes at this major international event.





## Community Workforce Development Program, #BeTheDrum, and POETA: Three Pathways to Career Success

The Community Workforce Development Program is a pilot project funded by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and coordinated through NWAC's Economic Development team. The program endeavours to reduce barriers to employment and provide training to address skills gaps and increase employability for Indigenous WG2STGD+ individuals living in communities with populations under 10,000 people.

To date, we have signed program contribution agreements with seven provincial and territorial member associations (PTMAs) from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nunavut, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

PTMAs in these regions have been the catalyst to developing partnerships with local organizations such as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and universities. This network between sectors is vital to its success. Individuals are granted access to training through their local PTMAs and are then provided placements for employment in SMEs that align with their newly obtained skill sets.

Program participants are guided through the process by a community liaison officer who helps them complete their training and place them in jobs. This hands-on contact provides participants with the support they need to enter the workforce and succeed.

In December, we hosted the first of three roundtables focused on Indigenous communities in the western region of the country. The purpose of the roundtable was to discuss the current labour market situation for W2STGD+ individuals in the region and build

stronger connections and understanding between employment sectors.

The roundtable discussion was attended by PTMA representatives from the Women of the Swift Flowing River Cultural Network Incorporated (WSFR-CNI) in Saskatchewan and the Alberta Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women.

Attendees also included a representative from the Neyaskweyahk Group of Companies Inc. and from Ermineskin Cree Nation. Presentations were delivered by academics from the University of Victoria, Lethbridge University, and Simon Fraser University.

In the coming months we will host two more roundtables with a focus on the northern and eastern regions.

The information gathered from these roundtables, along with the job placement experiences of participants and extensive research conducted by NWAC, will be included in a national workforce strategy, which will be completed once the program ends. We hope that through this program we can cultivate economic resiliency and address the unique challenges and barriers to employment for Indigenous communities.





## #BeTheDrum

Ten out of 12 PTMAs have signed the memorandum of understanding with NWAC to share information and resources on entrepreneurship in their regions as well as to help promote entrepreneurship. PTMAs will receive approximately \$21,000 per year (for two years) to help support this initiative.

BTD hosted and facilitated two online workshops, two online networking events, and three online peer support circles in January 2024.

Patricia Newman of White Owl Unique Crafts presented on the many uses of land-based medicine, sharing how to discover, harvest, and use many land-based medicines in our environment. Sixty people attended the online workshop. Kassondra Walters, a social entrepreneur and founder of KD Management and Consulting, gave an empowering workshop on tips to elevate a business, with a focus on strategic marketing, effective financial management, leadership proficiency, establishing a robust digital presence, and adapting sustainable business practices. A total of 25 participants attended the online workshop. Waneek Horn-Miller, from Indigenous Financial Services, co-facilitated with BTD on the virtual networking events, helping entrepreneurs make new community connections, explore peer

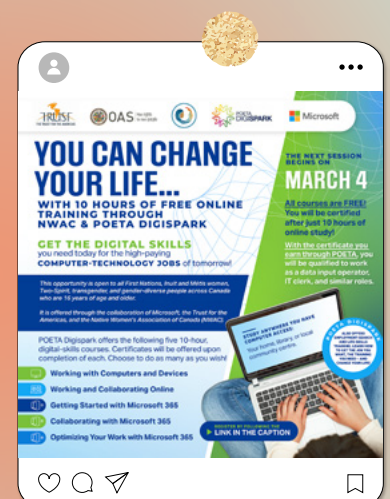
mentorship opportunities, and develop professionally as entrepreneurs.

BTD has selected and highlighted [10 entrepreneurs of the month](#) from April 2023 to January 2024.

## POETA

In January 2024, 37 individuals successfully graduated from POETA Cohort 1. Their success showcases the impact of the POETA program on fostering essential digital skills. In preparation for Cohort II, we are gearing up for a major communication campaign in February. Through a collaboration with NWAC's Communications team, we have created engaging posters aimed at increasing awareness and participation in POETA. The most exciting news is that registrations for the second cohort are now open!

Scheduled to start March 4, the second cohort presents an excellent opportunity for individuals to develop their digital skills. Our goal is ambitious yet achievable—to recruit between 100 and 150 participants for this upcoming cohort. By doing so, we hope to further expand the reach and impact of this program, empowering even more individuals with valuable digital skills.





### | SPREADING THE WORD

During the months of December 2023 and January 2024, the Communications team worked on various campaigns to promote NWAC's advocacy work and further our objectives to uplift Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse (WG2STGD) people.

In December, we published issue 22 of NWAC's magazine [Kci-Niwesq](#). This edition focused on traditional healing, land-based treatments, our Resiliency Lodges, and medical practices informed by ancestral knowledge. It included an article on the power of plant-based medicines, including the "big four" tobacco, sage, sweetgrass, and cedar. It also featured initiatives at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto to incorporate traditional healing into treatment plans for Indigenous patients.

On December 1, we issued a [press release](#) applauding the first steps taken by the federal government to create an alert system for missing Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse people. NWAC thanked NDP MP Leah Gazan for her efforts to make the Red Dress Alert system a reality, but urged the government to continue consulting with survivors, frontline workers, and families to implement the alert program in the most effective way possible.

On December 9, we released a statement in a [press release](#) marking the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. This press release highlighted the fact that genocide continues against Indigenous Peoples in Canada today.

On December 10, to mark the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration

of Human Rights, we issued a [press release](#) stating that this vital declaration continues to provide the framework for much of our advocacy work.

In recognition of the winter solstice and the holiday season, on December 21, we issued a [press release](#) sending wishes of peace, joy, and happiness across the world.

To mark National Ribbon Skirt Day on January 4, we produced a [press release](#) to unveil the special Ribbon Skirt Exhibit, which showcased the rich cultural heritage of ribbon skirts; these skirts represent a powerful symbol of identity and empowerment. The exhibit was displayed in the vault on the first floor of our head office at 120 Promenade du Portage, in Gatineau, Quebec, and ran for one month, beginning on December 21.

This year marks the 2nd anniversary of National Ribbon Skirt Day, which was inspired by a young Indigenous girl from Cote First Nation who, during her elementary school's "formal dress day," wore a ribbon skirt and was shamed and dismissed by educators. The incident fueled a collective effort urging the federal government to officially acknowledge the cultural significance of the ribbon skirt.

We started the new year with a new issue of [Kci-Niwesq](#). This edition covered the correctional system in Canada and the disproportionate and alarming overincarceration of Indigenous women, Two Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse people. It included an interview with Ivan Zinger, the Correctional Investigator of Canada, who concluded that Indigenous healing lodges offer far better outcomes than incarceration and that the current incarceration rate of Indigenous women,



Two Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse people in Canada is “unconscionable.” This issue also highlighted the 12 Indigenous women who have experienced injustice in the Canadian correctional system.

## Social Media

During the month of December, our social media accounts saw a 77.1% increase in engagements across several platforms, including X/Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. In particular, our Facebook profile saw a 66.5% growth in followers and our video views across platforms increased by 156%, representing over 18,000 views. During the month, we published 266 total posts with a net audience growth of 1,569. A post featuring the beautiful artwork of a grandmother and baby by Eloy Bida (@eloybida) with the caption “The roots never forget their flowers” had our greatest reach, with 480,531 views.

As we started a new year, our audience numbers continued to grow across platforms, with a 13.3% total net audience growth. Our Instagram account saw a boost of 9.3% in engagements and a 28.7% growth in net followers.

One of our most popular posts this month was the artwork of Malaika Ishtiaq (@minimal.artistic) with the caption “You spend most of your life inside your head, make it a nice place to be,” which received 12,113 engagements.

During the month of January, we published 266 social media posts across our platforms, including X.com (Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [X/Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), and [LinkedIn](#) to stay up to date on all of NWAC’s initiatives and be sure to subscribe to our magazine, [Kci-Niwesq](#).





## | *Reviewing Indigenous-Led Healing and Wellness Initiatives*

Over the past several months, the Executive Policy team has delved deep into a literature review on Indigenous-led wellness initiatives.

The literature review explored six core principles found across academic literature related to Indigenous-led healing and wellness:

- trauma-informed care
- strengths-based empowerment
- Elder-led wisdom
- culturally safe practices
- community-led services
- land- and arts-based approaches

Together, we found these principles can steer health care and wellness initiatives towards cultural competence, respect, and community empowerment.

The review highlighted the limitation of representing Indigenous WG2STGD+ people's perspectives in the literature and urges future research that is more inclusive of their perspectives. Achieving this entails delving into the impacts of Indigenous healing programs on diverse groups and exploring insights from less conventional sources.

The review also illustrated the transformative power of integrating Indigenous perspectives into mainstream health care. By adopting the six principles highlighted here, health care systems can move towards providing culturally competent and empowering care for Indigenous Peoples.

Ultimately, this literature review highlighted the importance of including Indigenous-led practices in health programming and spoke to the critical role of Indigenous knowledge systems in approaching healing initiatives. We look forward to sharing the full literature review with you in the coming months.



## | Exploring Medical Assistance in Dying

The Health team at NWAC is working on a project on medical assistance in dying (MAID) and its impact on Indigenous women, Two-Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse (W2STGD+) individuals in Canada. Funded by Indigenous Services Canada, this project is part of the federal government's efforts to include Indigenous perspectives and experiences in the federal policy on MAID.

In collaboration with Indigenous communities and facilitated by our provincial and territorial membership associations (PTMAs), the team is exploring the unique challenges and perspectives surrounding MAID within Indigenous populations. Our goal is to explore issues related to the quality of care, accessibility, and potential coercion, while amplifying Indigenous voices and advocating for inclusive policies.

We first held sharing circles with Indigenous W2STGD+ individuals across Canada. The circles were held in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, and Ontario, and four more are planned. We also sent out surveys targeting both Indigenous W2STGD+

individuals and MAID practitioners. The survey for MAID practitioners will help us identify knowledge gaps among practitioners.

The results from both surveys offer insight into the challenges and perspectives that Indigenous communities have about MAID.

Initial findings highlight the impact of settler colonialism on shaping Indigenous views on this issue. We have identified significant gaps in information, resources, and access to MAID in Northern and remote Indigenous communities, as well as a lack of cultural relevance in current procedures. Survey results from MAID practitioners underscore the need for heightened awareness and training among practitioners.

Moving forward, we will continue to analyze data and engage with communities to address concerns that have been identified. Our aim is to develop targeted recommendations for policy-makers, practitioners, and academics that promote culturally competent approaches to end-of-life care for Indigenous W2STGD+ individuals.





## | Addressing Indigenous Women's Overincarceration in Canada

In a [recent press release](#), NWAC amplified the Office of the Correctional Investigator's (OCI) findings. In the 2022–2023 annual report, the OCI highlights a grave concern: Indigenous women make up more than half of all federal prison populations. In some institutions, Indigenous women form 90%. Termed a “human rights travesty” by NWAC, this issue underscores a systemic problem within the Canadian criminal justice and federal corrections systems.

Despite numerous recommendations from the OCI to address this imbalance, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) has shown no progress, as the rate of incarcerated Indigenous women continues to rise. NWAC stands in solidarity with these recommendations and expresses disappointment at the CSC's sluggish implementation of legislative amendments designed to address this over-representation.

NWAC's role extends beyond advocacy to serve as a critical informant to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, highlighting the systemic nature of this overincarceration and its far-reaching impacts. Our efforts focus not just on numbers but on the lives and rights of Indigenous women who find themselves disproportionately penalized by the justice system.

The crux of the issue lies in the effectiveness of the CSC's implementation of legislative amendments. These amendments, which are intended to redress the over-representation of Indigenous people in the justice system, require rigorous evaluation. NWAC calls for transparent data and research to assess how these changes are being put into action on the ground, and questions whether they are merely words on paper or catalysts for tangible change.

This call for accountability goes beyond compliance with legislative changes; it represents a broader commitment to human rights and social justice. The overincarceration of Indigenous women is a multifaceted issue, rooted in historical injustices and ongoing systemic biases. Addressing it requires an intersectional approach that considers the unique challenges faced by Indigenous women, including poverty, trauma, and lack of access to supportive services.





Our advocacy efforts stand as a beacon of hope in this challenging landscape. As an intervenor in the case brought by the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS), we are addressing critical legal issues that impact Indigenous women. The CAEFS case, presented before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, challenges systemic discrimination in Canada's correctional system, particularly the policies and practices that lead to the overincarceration of Indigenous women. By participating in this case, we are not only highlighting these injustices but also advocating for substantial reforms. Their involvement in the tribunal is a crucial step in shedding light on these issues and fostering meaningful dialogue and action. Our efforts emphasize the need for a justice system that is not only fair and equitable but also truly reflect the diverse society we serve. ✧

As Canada grapples with its history and seeks to forge a path toward reconciliation, addressing the overincarceration of Indigenous women must be a priority. It is a matter of justice, equity, and human dignity. Through our relentless advocacy and unwavering commitment, NWAC continues to remind us that change is not only necessary but possible.

Our reinforcement of the OCI's findings signals an urgent need for action. It poses a direct challenge to the CSC to provide clear data and research demonstrating the effectiveness of their strategies to reduce the over-representation of Indigenous women. This situation calls for a concerted effort from all stakeholders in the Canadian justice system to engage in deep reflection and reassessment. There is a pressing need to recommit to a path of genuine justice and equality, ensuring that the rights and dignity of the most marginalized and overlooked in our society are not just recognized but actively upheld. ✧







## INTERNATIONAL UNIT

### | *International Knowledge and Cultural Exchanges a Success*

NWAC's Going Global initiative is aimed at enhancing the social, economic, cultural, and political well-being of Indigenous WG2STGD+ people worldwide. CEO Lynne Groulx recently embarked on a trip to Guatemala to strengthen connections with our overseas counterpart, further solidify NWAC's core objectives, and explore various engagement avenues. The visit included efforts to foster trade opportunities, stimulate economic growth, exchange knowledge and culture with local Indigenous people, and participate in governmental discussions with organizations dedicated to women and gender equality.

While in Guatemala, our CEO also commemorated the Day of Truth and Reconciliation. She attended a presentation by Donald Nicholls, the Director of the Cree Nation Government Department of Justice and Correctional Services, on the Truth and Reconciliation Action Plan. The presentation emphasized the importance of facing historical truths, especially concerning residential schools and the forced disruption of Indigenous cultures within their communities, as a foundation for genuine reconciliation.

During the mission, NWAC's CEO met with Sylvie Bedard, the Director General for Central America and the Caribbean, and Ms. Bedard reciprocated by visiting the NWAC headquarters in Gatineau. Discussions

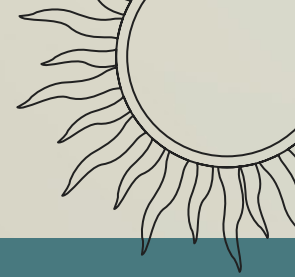
centred on our objectives for the Americas, with Ms. Bedard express commitment to helping NWAC achieving our Going Global goals. Our CEO and Ms. Bedard agreed to exchange information to strengthen ties with Indigenous communities abroad and pledged support for NWAC's missions in the Americas.

Global Affairs Canada invited NWAC to participate in the Costa Rica, fireside chat event, where NWAC moderated discussions involving Mary Ng, Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development of Canada, and Manuel Tovar, Minister of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica and President of the Costa Rican Foreign Trade Promoter. Talks centred on inclusive trade; gender and Indigenous angles to trade (including trade agreements such as the Global Trade and Gender Arrangement-GTAGA and Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Cooperation Agreement-IPETCA; rules-based trade (importance of free trade agreements); economic cooperation in the hemisphere; and opportunities for investing in the innovation sector.

The event was a success, with NWAC's insights on trade matters being acknowledged. A commitment was made to continue collaborative efforts for the well-being of Indigenous communities in Canada and women.







## MMIWG2S+ TEAM

### | NWAC's MMIWG2S+ Engagement Sessions

In recent months, NWAC's MMIWG2S+ unit has participated in a variety of meetings and engagements to advocate for and promote the safety of Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, transgender, and gender-diverse (WG2STGD+) people.

On January 29, we hosted a meeting at our Social, Cultural and Economic Innovation Centre with members of the RCMP. The meeting focused on enhancing the NWAC-RCMP relationship, building trust and accountability, and sharing key priority areas relating to the MMIWG2S+ genocide.

On January 24, we met with the federal MMIWG Secretariat for an engagement session on the Red Dress Alert system. In addition to sharing our vision for the system, we highlighted systemic issues that must be resolved. These include mechanisms for reporting missing Indigenous WG2STGD+

people, victim services, data collection due to the absence of a centralized national database, under-reporting, racial bias, a lack of disaggregated data, jurisdictional issues, and distrust of law enforcement services.

We delivered a presentation on the topic of gender inequality, peace, and security as well as innovative programming at the University of Ottawa's Women, Peace and Security Symposium on February 9.

In the coming weeks, the unit will be hosting a roundtable with 15 Indigenous WG2STGD+ people who are members, former members, or have experience engaging with the Canadian Armed Forces or the Department of National Defence. The purpose of the roundtable is to offer perspectives and recommendations on sexual and other forms of misconduct in the defence community.





## | Weighing in on Climate Change

### *Invitation to Join Canadian Delegation*

On August 22, 2023, NWAC's President (or an alternate) received an invitation to join the Canadian delegation at the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which took place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from November 30 to December 12, 2023. The invitation was also included a technical-level expert from NWAC.

NWAC was also invited to join the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP), which is a constituted body that was established at COP 24 in Katowice, December 2018.



The body was established to further operationalize the LCIPP and facilitate the implementation of its three functions related to knowledge, capacity for engagement, and climate change policies and actions.

It was decided that technical expertise is prioritized at these technical conferences. NWAC was represented by Madeleine Redfern and Lisa Smith at COP27.

It was decided that this year's technical expert is 1st Vice President Gena Edwards, given her PhD in Global Governance. Lisa Smith was chosen to support her.



The NWAC nominees are funded by Environment Climate Change Canada (ECCC). Each nominee is reimbursed up to \$6,000. Therefore, it was decided to attend the conference for one week. The dates were chosen to allow for participation at the FWG, Indigenous Caucus (November 28–29), and the first few days of the conference.

### *10th Meeting of the Facilitating Working Group (FWG)*

The NWAC delegates arrived in Dubai on November 26, and the next day made their way to the FWG meeting.

The discussion was very productive. There was a main plenary discussion about the role of Indigenous Peoples, full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, and how to influence the new leadership of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and ensure the global standard is consistent with nature-based solutions and our collective priorities for COP28.

We discussed how critical it is for Indigenous Peoples to be a part of the design and implementation of climate action, and as a procedural issue, how to incorporate knowledge of FWG into negotiations. We also discussed climate finance goals, lack of baseline data, Indigenous knowledge as a part of science, and incorporating traditional knowledge into strategic plans on adaptation. We also discussed the current work plan, which ends in 2024, the Green Climate Fund, and a youth strategy.

While sitting with our region (North America), we discussed the following in order to influence the next three-year work plan.



*Pictured is Gena and Lisa Qiluqqi Koperqualuk, President of Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Canada and Vice-Chair of ICC International.*

In terms of good practices, we discussed data sovereignty and ethical protocols as it comes to sharing traditional knowledge.

In relation to building capacity, we reminded the caucus that internet access is not always a given.

In discussing engagement, we discussed

the importance of revitalizing Indigenous languages and reminded the caucus that this is the United Nations decade of Indigenous Languages—thus the UN system must align itself to build capacity and engage in this way.

We discussed the importance of intersectional Indigenous identities when engaging.

We also reiterated our topic for the side event—a trauma-informed approach to climate action and emergency responses.

## Indigenous Caucus

The NWAC delegation travelled to Zayed University to take part in the Indigenous Caucus. There was an unprecedented number of Indigenous participants (over 300), including the Executive Director of the International Indian Tribal Council (IITC) and the President of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII).

We discussed the mechanism for a loss and damage fund and discussed how Indigenous Peoples must have direct access to this fund



We discussed the process of negotiations as well as substantive principles such as reciprocity, interconnectivity (living in harmony with nature), and more pressing issues such as the global stocktake.

The overarching goal of the Paris Agreement is to hold “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and pursue efforts “to limit





the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.”



Phasing out fossil fuels and a just transition formed part of this discussion.

Our shared vision is ensuring that a rise in temperature does not go above a sustainable level.

We discussed adaptation and mitigation strategies and aligning messaging with data sovereignty.

We also discussed the importance of each member fostering good relationships with their respective states so that they are consistent on Indigenous Caucus messaging in all negotiations.



## Meeting with Canadian Ambassador of Climate Change

The NWAC delegation met with Canada’s Ambassador for Climate Change, Catherine Stewart. We stressed the importance of aligning Canada’s negotiations with Minister Joly’s feminist foreign policy, which is quite progressive in terms of intersectionality.

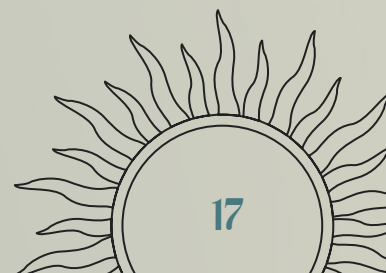
We also stressed that NWAC would like to see “cultural relevance” referenced in the negotiations and reiterated that Canada’s gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) approach does not go far enough in ensuring intersectionality, and that a trauma-informed lens should be reflected in public policy.



Lastly, we provided concrete examples of adaptation such as migration routes of salmon in the Fraser River and the need for nature-based solutions. We discussed how Indigenous Peoples are affected by climate change and the importance of adaptation strategies that affect not only our people but our identities and ways of life. We advised that we are experiencing eco-grief.

## Interview with Pacific Cooperation Broadcasting Limited – Pasifika TV

The NWAC delegation was approached by Pacific Cooperation Broadcasting Limited to discuss our COP28 goals. They also inquired about our desire(s) to travel to the Pacific islands.





The 1st VP, Gena Edwards, discussed being an Islander and her desire to travel to that part of the world. She also talked about how the delegation is ensuring that Canada and other states are implementing human rights approaches into all their negotiations.

Listen to the [interview](#).



## Opening of Canadian Pavilion and Indigenous Pavilion

On December 1, the 1st VP was asked to sing Martina Pierre's Women's Warrior to open the Canadian Pavilion.

President Cassidy Carron of the Métis National Council (MNC), President Lisa Qiluqai Koperqualuk of ICC, and Grand Chief Judy Wilson of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) joined Steven Guilbault, Minister of ECCC, and Ambassador Stewart to discuss collective goals and perspectives on climate action and set the intention for meaningful engagement at COP28.



## Inclusive Resiliency: Indigenous Women on the Frontline of Climate Disasters

This side event focused on the themes of frontline communities: inclusion, nature and land use, and technology and innovation. The event discussed NWAC's project with the Canadian Red Cross around research into disaster preparedness using a culturally relevant, gender-based, intersectional lens. An intimate conversation also took place with COP28 delegates about their respective regional climate disasters. Given the recent wildfires, thawing of permafrost, and intense hurricanes and the fact that Indigenous Peoples are on the frontlines, the conversation was at times emotional.

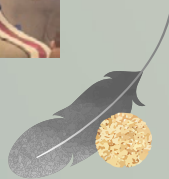
Participants were interested in hearing concrete, on-the-ground examples, such as how Indigenous People are vulnerable to human trafficking when displaced by extreme weather events. We advised that climate relief must consider the realities of our women and gender-diverse people.



Pictured with the co-founder and Executive Director of TakingITGlobal, Jennifer Corriero.

## Meeting with Canadian Minister of Environment and Climate Change

The meeting with Minister Guilbault was successful in that he actively listened to the points we made. We reiterated the importance of aligning Canada's negotiations with the feminist foreign policy. We reiterated the importance of intersectionality and







culturally relevant gender-based analysis in addressing climate challenges.

We also gave the Minister concrete examples of how climate change is drastically impacting our ways of life, including a loss of identity.

In addition, we discussed the proposed mechanism for loss and damage and how this will affect the Indigenous Peoples of the Global South.

Overall, the NWAC delegation had a successful COP28.







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