

NWAC PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This publication highlights the various activities the president has undertaken throughout the month of January.



LORRAINE WHITMAN

NWAC's President

Lorraine Whitman was elected as the president of the Native Women's Association of Canada on September 14, 2019. Prior to her presidency at NWAC, Ms. Whitman served as president of the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association and has been advocating for Indigenous women's rights over the past 45 years.

January 2020 President's Report

Dear friends,

Indigenous women are all too familiar with the shortcomings of Canadian institutions and structures. It's not easy to forget when you face these systemic barriers every day. Yet, without needing any reminder, January delivered us a stark one with the [Correctional Investigator of Canada's report on incarcerated Indigenous people](#).

The numbers are disturbing (see NWAC's [news release](#) for our response to the findings). They illustrate that an extremely disproportionate and growing number of Indigenous people are being incarcerated compared to non-Indigenous people. First Nations, Inuit and Métis women now make up 42 per cent of incarcerated women in Canada despite only composing 4 per cent of the overall female population.

I know it's hard not to feel defeated when you hear numbers like these. But I ask all of you—all of us—to instead use this report as fodder for our ever-growing fire. Let us take these numbers as both proof of the colonialist, racist and sexist systems that we continue to fight and as inspiration to realize our vision for something better.

It's good to remember that we already have excellent resources at our disposal. The National Inquiry's Final Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) and the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission both address the changes that need to occur within and beyond the criminal justice system. NWAC has also been very vocal in calling for the implementation of all 231 Calls for Justice; our latest work involved convening a National Roundtable with over 64 participants from PTMAs across the country.

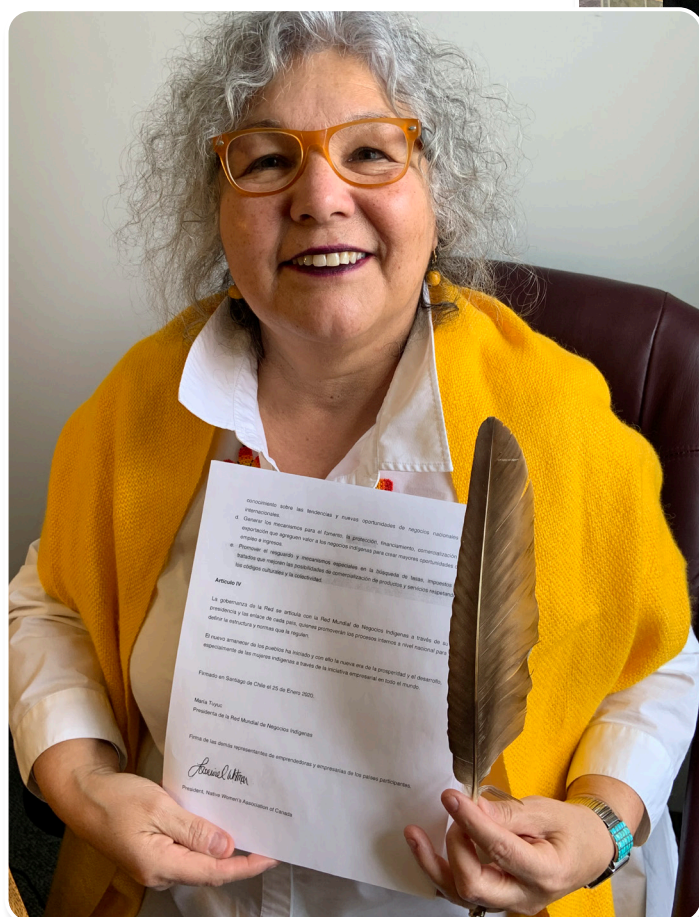
Let me remind you that change only occurs when each one of us decides to take action. The Government of Canada has committed to releasing a National Action Plan in response to the Final Report on MMIWG by June of this year. Let's hold them to it.

Thank you, Kukwstsétsemc

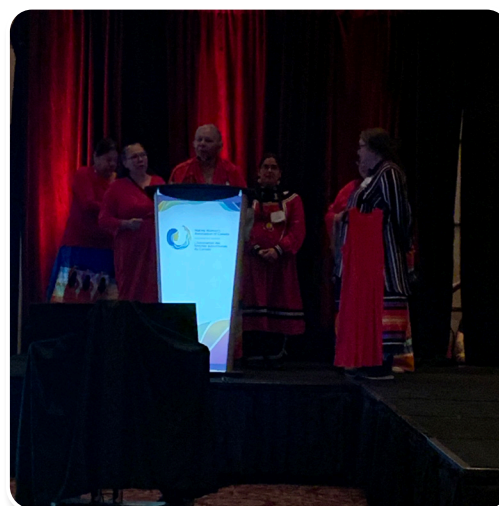


President Lorraine Whitman

NWAC President Lorraine Whitman and Senior Director of Legal Services, Communications and Business Development Steven Pink meet with Dr. Ivan Zinger, Correctional Investigator of Canada, following the release of his report on the overincarceration of Indigenous people in Canada.



Ms. Whitman signs the Estados Unidos de America (San Jose) Alliance Agreement on January 26. This agreement, which promotes and supports inter-country trade and economic opportunities, is also known as the Canada–United States–Mexico Agreement (CUSMA).



Ms. Whitman takes part in the Honour Song for MMIWG at NWAC's National Roundtable on the Implementation of the Calls for Justice on January 18 and 19.



Ms. Whitman meets with artisan card maker Marie Sack, whose latest designs are in commemoration of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, on January 29.

Ms. Whitman is shown around Acadia University's new Fabrication Lab on January 30. The lab was established to encourage innovation in design creativity, sustainability and education.

from left: President Whitman, Associate Professor Donna Sears and Professor Terrence Weatherbee.



Ms. Whitman meets with award-winning architect Omar Ghandi, who is known for his innovative home designs, on January 31. Mr. Ghandi operates two studios, in Toronto and Halifax.





Native Women's
Association of Canada



L'Association des
femmes autochtones
du Canada

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