

A Call to End Genocide: OCASI Statement on Calls For Justice by the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

19 June 2019 / Toronto – OCASI – Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants denounces all violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, and calls on all governments in Canada to act urgently to implement the Calls For Justice presented in “[Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)”.

The National Inquiry has concluded that Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and particularly Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people have been subject to a genocide that persists to this day.

While we are not surprised at the finding, we feel shock, sadness and anger at the depth and breadth of the injustice and pain Indigenous Peoples continue to face through ongoing settler colonialism. We offer gratitude and respect to the survivors and families that came forward to share their truth with the National Inquiry and thus with Canadians. We know that the truths of many missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA individuals remain untold, and their lives unaccounted. We are grateful to the thousands of people who contributed in different ways to this process.

OCASI echoes the Inquiry’s call to end the race-based genocide of Indigenous Peoples, especially women, girls and the 2-Spirited. We echo the call to restore the rights of Inuit, Métis, and First Nations women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people and restore them to their power and place, and for transformative legal and social changes.

OCASI believes this is the most urgent priority today for all governments.

The National Inquiry calls for a permanent commitment to ending the genocide through a set of Calls For Justice, and notes that they are legal imperatives that arise from international and domestic human and Indigenous rights laws. Thus Canada is legally obliged to implement the Calls For Justice.

The Calls For Justice are intended for more than governments, institutions and industries. They are also meant for all the residents of these lands and territories – to play our respective parts in transforming systemic and societal values that serve to maintain colonial violence.

The National Inquiry describes the foundational right to self-determination and the importance of conceptualizing rights as founded in all relationships. It calls for a National Action Plan to address violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, and an Anti-Racism and Anti-Sexism National Action Plan to end racist and sexualized stereotypes of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. The National Inquiry rightfully expects us all to read the Calls and understand and act on our respective obligations.

OCASI and our member agencies across the province of Ontario have worked in various ways to build respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples, and build awareness and understanding among newcomer communities. We recognize that our efforts at decolonizing our own work is ongoing.

The National Inquiry includes Calls For Justice for All Governments; and Calls For Justice: Industries, Institutions, Services and Partnerships. It includes a specific set of Calls For Justice for All Canadians, which will be foundational to our work going forward, and they are reproduced here in full:

Calls For Justice for All Canadians

15.1 Denounce and speak out against violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

15.2 Decolonize by learning the true history of Canada and Indigenous history in your local area. Learn about and celebrate Indigenous Peoples' history, cultures, pride, and diversity, acknowledging the land you live on and its importance to local Indigenous communities, both historically and today.

15.3 Develop knowledge and read the *Final Report*. Listen to the truths shared, and acknowledge the burden of these human and Indigenous rights violations, and how they impact Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people today.

15.4 Using what you have learned and some of the resources suggested, become a strong ally. Being a strong ally involves more than just tolerance; it means actively working to break down barriers and to support others in every relationship and encounter in which you participate.

15.5 Confront and speak out against racism, sexism, ignorance, homophobia, and transphobia, and teach or encourage others to do the same, wherever it occurs: in your home, in your workplace, or in social settings.

15.6 Protect, support, and promote the safety of women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people by acknowledging and respecting the value of every person and every community, as well as the right of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people to generate their own, self-determined solutions.

15.7 Create time and space for relationships based on respect as human beings, supporting and embracing differences with kindness, love, and respect. Learn about Indigenous principles of relationship specific to those Nations or communities in your local area and work, and put them into practice in all of your relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

15.8 Help hold all governments accountable to act on the Calls for Justice, and to implement them according to the important principles we set out.

OCASI encourages our member agencies, all those in the immigrant and refugee-serving sector as well as all other residents of Canada to read the entire report as a starting point to acting on the Calls For Justice.

All the materials published by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, including the complete set of Calls For Justice may be found at <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/>

OCASI – Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants is the umbrella organization for immigrant and refugee serving agencies in Ontario and the collective voice for the sector. OCASI asserts the right of all persons to participate fully and equitably in the social, cultural, political and economic life of Ontario.

OCASI - Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

110 Eglinton Ave. West, Suite 200
Toronto, Ontario
M4R 1A3

Telephone: 416-322-4950
Fax: 416-322-8084
TTY: 416-322-1498

generalmail@ocasi.org
www.ocasi.org
www.settlement.org

