



**FEMMES AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC INC.**  
**QUEBEC NATIVE WOMEN INC.**

**Press release**  
**For immediate distribution**

## **Indigenous women elected in key roles: the perpetuation of our ancestral traditions**

**Kahnawake, July 12, 2021** - The beginning of July was full of welcome surprises for us as Indigenous women. For the first time in modern history, Indigenous women were appointed or elected to key governance positions at the regional and national levels.

We extend our congratulations to Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer who became the first female, two-spirited person to be elected to the position of Grand Chief of Kahnawake, Quebec. We also wish to convey our congratulations to Mary Simon an Inuk from Kuujuaq, Quebec, who was appointed as the first Indigenous Governor General of Canada and Rose Anne Archibald, from Ontario, who became the first woman elected as National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) of Canada.

Quebec Native Women (hereafter QNW) welcomes this new era of change that gives hope to Indigenous women who have political aspirations. The need for Indigenous women in these positions of power is necessary to bring about change to improve the conditions of our women who suffer disproportionate levels of all forms of violence, live in poor socio-economic conditions and have been excluded from their traditional decision-making and governance roles since the imposition of the 1876 *Indian Act*. As an organization that supports the efforts of all Indigenous women in Quebec and defends their rights, we support and applaud these newly elected women and are convinced that they will play an important role in the decolonization of all systems affecting us, Indigenous women.

The Quebec government still refuses to recognize systemic racism and to adopt Joyce's principle. We will continue to hear more news about the unmarked graves of Indigenous children and requests by Indigenous communities and organizations to search former residential schools to locate their loved ones. The issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women is still not being addressed by governments in a way that truly addresses the situation, but we believe that the situation will improve with the newly elected women.

*"I welcome these announcements. As women and Indigenous people, we have a lot of knowledge and experience to bring to positions of representation and governance. Their presence in politics will pave the way for all those who follow. It will also allow us to give women their rightful place. This is a major step towards the emancipation, empowerment and reclaiming of power for Indigenous women. We will continue to support Indigenous women in their autonomy and commitment to their communities,"* said Viviane Michel, President of QNW.

Source:

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