



FEMMES AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC INC.
QUEBEC NATIVE WOMEN INC.

Press release
For immediate release

Coroner's report: The existence of systemic racism is recognized

Kahnawake, September 30, 2021 — Quebec Native Women (QNW) welcomes the report of Coroner Me Géhane Kamel on the circumstances of Joyce Echaquan's death. This report recognizes that racism and prejudice contributed to the tragic death of Ms. Echaquan. QNW considers this recognition a concrete step on the right path.

QNW applauds her recommendation to the Quebec government to recognize the existence of systemic racism, in order to prevent such a situation from recurring and to protect human life. The Coroner goes on to urge the government to take the necessary steps to eradicate it.

QNW particularly emphasizes the sections where she concludes that there are biases and prejudices towards Indigenous communities that are not exclusive to the Centre hospitalier De Lanaudière but can be found in all health services in Quebec. It is unacceptable that a part of society continues to deny such a well-documented reality.

"It is clear that the road to reconciliation is a long and arduous one. Efforts are all the more necessary since the findings of this inquiry indicate that Ms. Echaquan was indeed ostracized, that her death was directly related to the care she received during her hospitalization in September 2020, and that her death could have been avoided," Mr. Kamel insists in his report.

"It is a breath of fresh air to see that the existence of systemic racism is recognized in the Coroner's report. Our Indigenous women and girls must feel safe in all spheres of society. The next step is to finally adopt Joyce's Principle and for the Quebec government to recognize the presence of systemic racism and discrimination," said Viviane Michel, President of QNW.

QNW joins the Coroner in insisting on the importance of guaranteeing the right to dignity, respect, life and security for all, without discrimination, and in encouraging the construction of a social pact in order to fully engage in a true reconciliation.

About QNW

Founded in 1974, Quebec Native Women is a non-profit organization that represents First Nations women in Quebec, as well as urban Indigenous women.

[Femmes autochtones du Québec](#) | [Femmes autochtones du Québec \(faq-qnw.org\)](#)

-30-

Source:

Doreen Petiquay Barthold

Communication Officer

Quebec Native Women

Business Complex, River Road

C.P. 1989, Kahnawake (Quebec) J0L 1B0

[514-757-1508](tel:514-757-1508) | communication@faq-qnw.org