



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

**Press release**  
**For immediate diffusion**

## **SYSTEMIC RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION: A CLEAR MESSAGE SENT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC**

**Kahnawake, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022** - Quebec Native Women (QNW) held a large gathering this afternoon near the Quebec National Assembly to send a clear message to the government of Prime Minister François Legault: systemic racism and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, particularly Indigenous women, exists in Quebec, and it is time for the government to recognize this and take concrete action to end it.

In this regard, QNW urges the Government of Quebec to not only recognize the existence of systemic racism and discrimination, but further to adopt Joyce's Principle. This would thus guarantee all Indigenous Peoples the right to equitable access without discrimination to all health and social services, as well as the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. QNW also wishes to recall that Every Child Matters and the calls for Justice for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

*"Today, Indigenous Peoples and their allies gathered in large numbers to demand that the Quebec government respond to the demands and concerns of Indigenous women. Premier Legault can no longer turn a blind eye. He must acknowledge the existence of systemic racism and adopt Joyce's Principle. The quality of our lives and those of future generations depends on it,"* said Marjolaine Étienne, president of Quebec Native Women.

### **"TOGETHER, AGAINST SYSTEMIC RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION"**

*"Recognition of Joyce's Principle is absolutely essential to ensure that the full range of services is equal and fair to all. It is a struggle that we must wage together for social justice, but also for the recognition of our rights as human beings. Systemic racism does exist, and this must first be recognized in order to bring about real change at the government level and in Quebec society as a whole,"* declared Sipi Flamand, Chief of the Manawan Atikamekw Council and bearer of Joyce's Principle in his speech.

Many courageous participants braved the bad weather of the day and showed up at the QNW gathering demanding that the Quebec government recognize the existence of systemic racism and discrimination in Quebec and adopt Joyce's Principle. The tragic events surrounding the death of Joyce Echaquan, as well as the recent revelations regarding imposed sterilization without free and informed consent, illustrate the dire need to provide culturally safe services across all areas.

*"For Joyce's memory, we will never abandon the mission she left as a legacy to all of us. Her cry will never be lost. It is united, together that we must work. The path will not be easy, but it is possible. Our cultures must regain respect and dignity, it is the foundation of our values. The Prime Minister must recognize that systemic*

*racism exists and that it must be eliminated to allow our peoples to receive the services to which all humanity is entitled. We are confident that the people of Quebec will stand with us and that together, for future generations, we will solidify these cracked bridges,"* said Diane Dubé, mother of Joyce Echaquan, in her speech at the gathering.

## **ONLINE PETITION**

To take part in QNW's efforts to be heard by the government, the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population is invited to distribute and sign the online petition on the National Assembly website. This petition will be brought before the elected officials next March by the deputy and co-spokesperson of Québec solidaire, Manon Massé, in order to ask the Government of Quebec to recognize systemic racism and discrimination in Québec and to adopt Joyce's Principle.

**Link for the online petition:** <https://faq-qnw.org/en/evenements/lets-sign-the-petition/>

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**Source:** Quebec Native Women \ <https://faq-qnw.org/>

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