



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES

HAUT-COMMISSARIAT DES NATIONS UNIES AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
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19 January 2026

Excellency,

I write to you in relation to the Committee's [letter](#) of 8 December 2023. The Committee has considered additional information received under its early warning and urgent action procedure in relation to the murder of Indigenous women in the province of Manitoba, Canada, in 2022.

The Committee thanks the State party for its response of 7 March 2025 to the abovementioned letter and for the information provided. It takes note of the State party's commitment to advancing reconciliation and a renewed relationship with Indigenous Peoples based on self-determination, rights, respect, trust, cooperation and partnership, as well as to upholding their rights under relevant international human rights instruments, including the Convention, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The Committee also takes note of the State party's acknowledgement that Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual Plus (2SLGBTQIA+) people in Canada continue to experience alarmingly high rates of violence, as well as its commitment to transformational change and to address the national tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. It welcomes the publication of the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in 2019 as well as the release of the 2021 National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People.

The Committee is also aware that in November 2024, the Government of Manitoba launched the *Mino 'Ayaawag Ikwewag* ("All Women Doing Well") Strategy to address the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, two-spirit and gender-diverse people and to support their safety, protection and empowerment. It also notes that the Manitoba Royal Canadian Mounted Police launched its Action Plan to Address Violence and Discrimination Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ in December 2023.

With regard to the murder of four Indigenous women in Manitoba in 2022, the Committee takes note that the author was convicted on four counts of first-degree murder and sentenced to four concurrent life sentences with no eligibility for parole for 25 years.

H.E. Mr. Peter MacDougall
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Regarding the search for the remains of the victims, the Committee takes note of the information provided by the State party that: (i) in March 2023 the Government of Canada provided \$500,000 to the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of the search in the Prairie Green Landfill, which concluded that a search would be feasible but complex and would present significant health and safety challenges; (ii) in October 2023, the Government of Canada provided \$740,000 to the Long Plain First Nation to develop detailed plans necessary to support the implementation of the search as described in the feasibility study; (iii) in March 2024, the Government of Manitoba announced that \$20 million would be made available to undertake a search of the Prairie Green Landfill; (iv) in April 2024, the Government of Canada identified in the Federal Budget a matching amount of \$20 million to support a search of the Prairie Green Landfill; (v) a second feasibility study, completed by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, identified serious safety concerns that required adequate safety precautions to be established before conducting the search; (vi) a comprehensive search plan of the Prairie Green Landfill was announced on 20 June 2024 and that Stage 4, searching the targeted zone, started on 2 December 2024.

The Committee is aware that the remains of some of the murdered Indigenous women were found at the Prairie Green landfill, and that a search for the remains of one of the victims at the Brady Road landfill would begin in December 2025.

Notwithstanding the information provided, the Committee notes with concern the allegations received regarding: (i) the initial refusal by the competent authorities, including the Winnipeg Police Service and the Government of Manitoba, to undertake the search to locate the remains of the victims, without clear explanation; (ii) delays at both levels of government in authorizing and conducting the search; (iii) the reported politicization of this issue by the former Government of Manitoba during the 2023 provincial election; (iv) the lack of adequate measures to prevent similar failures by police and public authorities in the future; (v) the injunction sought and obtained by the City of Winnipeg to suppress protests calling for the search of Prairie Green landfill, and the subsequent deployment of the police to enforce it.

In light of the above, and in accordance with Article 9 (1) of the Convention and Article 65 of its Rules of procedure, the Committee requests that the State party provide updated and detailed information on this situation, as part of its combined twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth periodic reports that are overdue since November 2021. In particular, it requests the State party to include information on the abovementioned allegations as well as on the measures adopted to: (i) conduct an inquiry into the initial refusal of the authorities of the State party to search for the remains of the Indigenous women murdered in Manitoba in 2022; (ii) prevent and firmly combat all forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls; (iii) ensure that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished with appropriate penalties, and that victims and their families have access to effective remedies and adequate reparation; (iv) provide support and access to equal services for survivors and their families; (v) fully implement calls for justice 1.7 and 1.10 of the 2019 final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.



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Allow me, Excellency, to reiterate the wish of the Committee to continue to engage in a constructive dialogue with the Government of Canada with a view to ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Balcerzak", followed by a horizontal line.

Michal Balcerzak
Chair

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination