



Statement on National Aboriginal Day

June 21 is National Aboriginal Day, a day to recognize and celebrate First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in Canada. On this day we have many reasons to celebrate and also many reasons to fight.

The Atlantic Region of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) supports all Aboriginal Peoples in their struggle for full access to all human rights and fundamental freedoms. We strongly believe that those freedoms include the right to preserve and strengthen their own political, economic, legal and cultural traditions and institutions.

PSAC-Atlantic has and will always support the idea of establishing a national public inquiry on missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada. With the recent tragic passing of Loretta Saunders, we have partnered with many organizations such as the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association and the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre. With the support from PSAC-Atlantic, the National Aboriginal Peoples' Circle (NAPC) and the Social Justice Fund, we have collaborated with the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre to create a visual reality of the missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada. The Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre constructed a 10-foot Dream Catcher on which 1100 smaller dream catchers are going to be hung, representing each and every one of our missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

We also proudly support the important work of Robert Saunders, Atlantic Director for Aboriginal Members, and National Aboriginal Peoples' Circle representatives Tanna Pirie-Wilson and Joey Dunphy. We would also like to congratulate them for establishing the first Regional Aboriginal Peoples' Circle here in the Atlantic. The purpose of this circle is to provide a traditional way for our Aboriginal members to congregate, discuss issues, and come up with solutions in a respectful, safe environment which is familiar to them traditionally but also promotes a feeling of harmony and kinship in those who participate.

On June 21st I hope that all PSAC members in the Atlantic will renew their commitment to achieving justice for Aboriginal people. We all know that it's time.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeannie Baldwin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeannie Baldwin
Regional Executive Vice-President