



UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 18th Session
United Nations Headquarters, New York

Violence Against Indigenous Women in the United States:

How Indigenous nations and women are leading the movement to end the epidemic of violence in Indian country and Alaska Native villages

Side Event

**April 24, 2019 at 11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
United Nations, Conference Room 6**



Violence against indigenous women is at unprecedented levels in the United States. More than 4 in 5 American Indian and Alaska Native women have experienced violence in their lifetimes, including more than half who have experienced sexual violence. The murder rate for indigenous women in some tribal communities is 10 times the national average. The panel will discuss these extreme levels of violence, particularly the urgent situation of Alaska Native women who are subjected to the highest rate of forcible sexual assault in the U.S. and missing and murdered American Indian and Alaska Native women. The panel also will highlight good practices and failures of United States law to respect the rights of indigenous women, including those rights recognized in the UN Declaration. Finally, panelists will describe how indigenous nations and women in the United States are leading the movement to end this epidemic of violence by securing reforms in United States law to protect the right of indigenous women to live free of all forms of violence and discrimination and to strengthen indigenous nations' ability to restore safety and justice to indigenous women.

Presenters

Terri Henry is a member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, a founding member of the National Congress of American Indians Task Force on Violence Against Native Women, and serves as the Chair of the Indian Law Resource Center Board of Directors. She is of the Longhair Clan of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and is a resident of the Painttown Community of the Qualla Boundary. Ms. Henry has extensive experience working in her tribal government. She was elected to Tribal Council in September 2009 to represent the Painttown Community and in 2013, was elected amongst her Tribal Council peers to be the first Tribal Council Chairwoman, and she was subsequently appointed as Secretary of State of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

Tami Truett Jerue is the mother of 4 children and the grandmother of 5. She is the Executive Director of the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center. Tami holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Work and a Master's in Community Psychology. She lived for many years in Anvik, Alaska, a small Athabascan community on the Yukon River and has years of experience working in the fields of Indian Child Protection, Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault, Counseling/Advocacy, Mental Health Counseling, and Addictions.

Paula Julian, serves as a Senior Policy Specialist for the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, responsible for monitoring policies, policy analysis and development, technical assistance, training, and the development of partnerships to strengthen laws, policies, and responses addressing violence against Indigenous women. She's played a lead role in developing the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center and Pouhana O Na Wahine, (Pillars of Women) – both organizations dedicated to addressing domestic and gender-based violence in the Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian community, respectively.

Co-sponsoring Organizations

Organized in 2015, the **Alaska Native Women's Resource Center** (AKNWRC) is a tribal nonprofit organization dedicated to ending violence against women with Alaska's 229 tribes and allied organizations. AKNWRC board members are Alaska Native women raised in Alaska Native Villages and have 141 years of combined experience in tribal governments, nonprofit management, domestic violence, and sexual assault advocacy (both individual crisis and systems and grassroots social change advocacy at the local, statewide, regional, national and international levels), and other social service experience. AKNWRC's philosophy is that violence against women is rooted in the colonization of indigenous nations. (<http://www.aknwrc.org/>).

Founded in 1978 by American Indians, the **Indian Law Resource Center** (ILRC) is a non-profit organization that provides legal assistance to indigenous peoples of the Americas to combat racism and oppression, to protect their lands and environment, to protect their cultures, to achieve sustainable economic development and genuine self-government, and to realize their other human rights. The ILRC's Safe Women, Strong Nation's project works with indigenous women's organizations and Native nations to end violence against indigenous women. ILRC is in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council. (www.indianlaw.org).

The **National Congress of American Indians** (NCAI) is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments, and works to end the epidemic of violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women. In 2003, NCAI created the NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women to address and coordinate an organized response to national policy issues regarding violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women. NCAI is in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council. (www.ncai.org).

The **National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, Inc.** (NIWRC) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure the safety of Native women by protecting and preserving the inherent sovereign authority of American Indian and Alaska Native nations to respond to domestic violence and sexual assault. NIWRC's Board consists of Native women leaders from American Indian and Alaska Native nations across the United States. NIWRC is a national resource center for Indian nations providing technical assistance, policy development, training, materials, resource information, and the development of tribal strategies and responses to end the violence.