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Statement Prisoners' Justice Day Observed – August 10, 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KINGSTON, ON (August 10, 2026)—This Prisoners' Justice Day, I am humbled to join the Prison for Women (P4W) Memorial Collective in Kingston, Ontario, to honour those who lived and died at the former P4W and too many other prisons across Canada.

On Prisoners' Justice Day and every day, we stand in solidarity with prisoners, their families, supporters and allies across the country as they honour the memory of the youth, men and women who have died in prisons.

Prisoners' Justice Day began as a commemoration of the preventable death of a prisoner in segregation at Millhaven Penitentiary more than five decades ago. Today, it is recognized around the world as a day that marks the international struggles against continued neglect, silence and inaction regarding the human rights and legal protections of and for prisoners.

Institutions—whether for child welfare, mental health, those for persons who are elderly and disabled, and especially prisons—must be transparent and accountable. As economic inequality deepens, federal legislation like Bills C-14 and C-16 risk further fuelling crises of mass incarceration of Black and Indigenous People, and those struggling with homelessness, poverty and disabling mental health issues.

We must ensure that [*Tona's Law*](#) (Bill S-205), and other recommendations of the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights with respect to the [*Human Rights of Federally-Sentenced Persons*](#) are implemented to breathe life into pathways for reintegration, build up investments in communities, and end and remedy egregious human and *Charter* rights violations and ensure judicial oversight and accountability of correctional services.

This Prisoners' Justice Day, and every day, let us honour those inside, their loved ones, advocates and allies who are working tirelessly to uphold human rights and dignity for all. Let us honour those seeking an end to systemic discrimination.

Let us honour all who lived and died in institutions and support the work of all whose courage and leadership both inside prisons and in their communities amount to decades of work to decolonize, decriminalize and decarcerate.

With humility and gratitude, we extend appreciation and respect to all marking this Prisoners' Justice Day. It is vital to hold Canada to account for its victimization, criminalization and imprisonment of those most economically, racially, socially and personally marginalized. Together, in solidarity, we can, and we must build a fair, just and inclusive future for all.

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