

Victim Impact Statement

Case Identification

Regina v. Karima Manji
(name of accused)

Court File #: 08-23-573

Victim: Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.
(name of victim)

Crown Office Location: Iqaluit, Nunavut

This form may be used to provide a description of the physical or emotional harm, property damage or economic loss suffered by you as the result of the commission of an offence, as well as a description of the impact of the offence on you. You may attach additional pages if you need more space.

Your statement must not include:

- any statement about the offence or the offender that is not relevant to the harm or loss you suffered;
- any unproven allegations;
- any comments about any offence for which the offender was not convicted;
- any complaint about any individual, other than the offender, who was involved in the investigation or prosecution of the offence; or
- except with the court's approval, an opinion or recommendation about the sentence.

You may present a detailed account of the impact the offence has had on your life. The following sections are examples of information you may wish to include in your statement. You are not required to include all of this information.

Victim Impact Statement

By making this statement, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. relied on the Agreed Statement of Facts in this case dated February 8, 2024.

1. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) represents Nunavut Inuit under the *Nunavut Agreement* (the “*Agreement*”) that came into effect in 1993.
2. NTI’s mission is to advance the economic, social, and cultural well-being of approximately 35,000 Nunavut Inuit through the full implementation of the *Agreement*. Our mandate is to ensure that the constitutionally protected rights of Nunavut Inuit are respected and that governments live up to their responsibilities in the *Agreement*.
3. Based on Article 35 of the *Agreement*, NTI, working with the Community Enrolment Committees (CECs) as well as the Regional Inuit Associations (RIAs), which provide administrative supports to CECs in their respective regions, maintains the Inuit Enrolment List. The CEC in each community is responsible for reviewing enrolment applications and making decisions for each community, with NTI and the respective RIA providing financial, policy, and administrative supports for the CEC operations.
4. The damage of Karima Manji’s crime is serious and went far beyond the monetary sums involved and specific individuals or organizations being victimized. Karima Manji’s crime resulted in irreparable damages to Inuit culture and traditions and loss of opportunities meant for Inuit/Indigenous youth, and caused far-reaching impacts on the Inuit enrolment system.
5. Karima Manji’s crime is part and parcel of the broader “Indigenous identity fraud” issue that plagues Nunavut, Canada and beyond, and should be viewed in that context. For centuries, Indigenous peoples have faced attacks to their inherent identities through systemic discrimination and aggressive assimilation efforts by governments and churches alike, including state-funded residential schools where Indigenous youth were abused, starved, forbidden from speaking their native languages, and forced to convert to Christianity, among other atrocities.
6. Colonizers have come to Indigenous lands trying to unilaterally assert their sovereignty, and have pillaged lands and resources, for their own gain and long-lasting benefit. They have also tried to destroy Indigenous cultures and traditions and have even appropriated them. Now, some non-Indigenous people have gone to the next level of theft and extraction and took aim at Indigenous identity itself.
7. In other words, the domineering society had attempted to strip Indigenous peoples of their inherent identity. In an ironic, perverse and disturbing turn, the last few decades have seen a rise in cases of non-Indigenous people exploiting Indigenous identity by making false or dubious claims to Indigeneity, which is known as “Indigenous identity fraud” or “Indigenous identity theft.”
8. Indigenous identity fraud is yet another way of taking from and profiting off the backs of Indigenous peoples. Indigeneity is seen as a benefit, a dollar sign, and a new form of resources to profit from. It is another reprehensible form of abuse.
9. Indigenous identity fraud is modern day assimilation. It dilutes and blurs Indigenous identity and history. In doing so, it minimizes and undermines the distinctiveness of Indigenous people, including the social, cultural, economic and historic basis for the existence of Indigenous peoples such as our ways of life, upbringing, values, knowledge, family and community relations,

Victim Impact Statement

spirituality, language, culture and kinship. It is seen as something that can simply be stolen, pretended, as some sort of label that is easy to “take”, “claim”, or “own”. People who commit Indigenous identity fraud make a mockery of individuals, communities and institutions as they attempt to dupe them in believing these falsehoods. Indigenous identity fraud undermines the lived experiences and struggles of legitimate Indigenous people. It constitutes an insult to Indigenous people whose ancestors have suffered and overcome immeasurable hardship and discrimination, and who have had to embody incredible resilience to preserve their languages, traditions, and ways of life.

10. Indigenous identity fraud negatively impacts and dilutes the rights of true Indigenous people, when the fraudsters take away and hi-jack opportunities that rightfully belong to Indigenous people. They put at risk and cause irreparable damage to Indigenous cultures and traditions and societies as a whole when they pretend to be the Indigenous cultural representatives, narrators and story tellers. Indigenous identity fraud causes irreparable harm by creating societal doubt and skepticism towards legitimate and genuine Indigenous identity. This contributes to the ongoing marginalization of authentic Indigenous people.
11. Colonization dispossessed generations of Inuit through colonial policies, such as tuberculosis treatment at sanatoria, day and residential schools, the Sixties Scoop and is continued through the child welfare system today. Still today, there are Inuit who have been denied their identity, language and culture by colonial policies. Their attempts to understand their histories and themselves and to reconnect with their families and communities have been harmed by the public questions of identity and distrust driven by Indigenous identity fraudsters like Karima Manji.
12. As a direct result of Karima Manji’s crime, her daughters received Inuit enrolment cards from NTI and took on a false Inuit identity, taking up Indigenous spaces and benefiting from supports, opportunities and programs intended for legitimate Nunavut Inuit and/or Indigenous people, including scholarships and prizes. Karima Manji’s crime also resulted in taking away from economic and self-reliance opportunities for real Inuit and Indigenous entrepreneurs from the sales through a small business that was marketed as Inuit/Indigenous owned. Indigenous people truly need those financial and non-financial measures and opportunities as a form of survival and to make-up for centuries of systemic discrimination targeted at Indigenous peoples.
13. What made Karima Manji’s crime especially outrageous is the deliberate fraud and the brazen lies she perpetuated. While the recently reported Indigenous identity cases in the academic, arts and other fields often involve tenuous connections to Indigenous communities or weak evidence, what Karima Manji committed was a complete and outright fabrication and falsehood. In the enrolment applications for her biological daughters, she shamelessly listed an innocent and unrelated Inuk woman, the late Kitty Noah, as both their “birth mother.” Karima Manji’s fraud is not only an insult to and an abuse of Kitty and the Noah family, but also of the CEC and the Inuit enrolment system in Nunavut. This is the first known enrolment fraud case in Nunavut. The rarity of false claims within the Inuit community can be attributed to the close-knit nature of the community as decisions are made by the CECs at the community level. Inuit are not only known by names but also by shared experiences, family bonds, and community ties. The knowledge of Inuit families within the community serves as a safeguard against attempts to falsely claim Inuit identity.

Victim Impact Statement

14. The close-knit bonds are further strengthened by the concept of “associated community” in Article 35 of the *Agreement*, which requires an applicant to apply for enrolment through the traditional community of his/her parents and grandparents.
15. Also, Article 35 of the *Agreement* contains an easy-to-use “correction mechanism”, allowing a CEC or any enrolled person to initiate an application or appeal to remove an enrolled individual for failure to meet the enrolment criteria.
16. With the above safeguards in place, the CEC decision-making process had been based on a user-friendly format with simplified evidentiary requirements, which improved efficiency and reduced the time and effort required for applicants to obtain and submit detailed evidence and documents to support their applications, especially given the fact that sometimes Inuit encounter issues receiving formal documents and forms from government and other agencies.
17. Karima Manji’s selfish crime has changed that. The CECs and NTI indeed had no choice but to strengthen the verification process, and further implemented requirements related to supporting documents and evidence for many categories of applications. These new/additional requirements have increased the paperwork burden for Inuit and potential delays.
18. We urge the court to consider the serious and far-reaching impacts stated above in your sentencing decision, to send a clear message that theft of Indigenous identity is a reprehensible crime against all Indigenous people, with significant damages beyond the monetary sums involved and the specific individuals or organizations being victimized.

☒ **I would like to present my statement in court.**

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this statement is true.

Dated this 24th day of June 2024, at Iqaluit, Nunavut.



Signature of declarant (on behalf of NTI)

Name: Marie Belleau

Position: Managing Legal Counsel, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

If you completed this statement on behalf of the victim, please indicate the reasons why you did so and the nature of your relationship with the victim:

Dated this _____ day of _____, 20____, at

Signature of declarant