



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs  
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct 1, 2019

## **AMC stands in solidarity with First Nations in Quebec in their call for a response to the Viens Commission Calls to Action following the release of the final report**

**Treaty One Territory, MB.** \_ The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs stands in solidarity with the First Nation and Inuit leadership of Quebec, following the release of the Viens Commission final report, an inquiry into Quebec's treatment of Indigenous peoples.

The report says the Province of Quebec has failed to meet the needs of First Nations and Inuit people and confirms that Indigenous people in Quebec are victims of "systemic discrimination" in accessing public services. The Viens commission, named after its president, retired Superior Court justice Jacques Viens, was launched in 2016. A total of 1188 stories and opinions were shared before the final hearing in December 2018. In total, 277 citizens shared personal stories of their experience dealing with police, hospital staff and other public services. The 520-page report includes 142 calls to action.

"It's disheartening to know that First Nations and Inuit people continue to face systemic discrimination when accessing public services in Canada," **said Grand Chief Arlen Dumas.** "The results of the report are disappointing, but not surprising. There must be concerted efforts to address the disparities existing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Quebec's social, political and economic systems and institutions. This same lens needs to be applied here in Manitoba given the Path to Reconciliation Act that was passed in 2016 by our provincial government. We need to be asking our First Nation people and the various service providers and organizations that are working to address gaps in the areas of child welfare, education, language and culture, and health and justice, if there continues to be inequality in accessing services. We would most likely hear the exact same stories".

"We extend strength and support to those who continue to face acts of injustice and inequality on a continued basis, including the 277 people who shared their personal stories during the inquiry," **said Grand Chief Arlen Dumas.** "There is no excuse to these acts of discrimination the Province of Quebec is permitting on the most vulnerable people in our society. We stand in solidarity with the First Nation and Inuit people of Quebec and call on the province to respond immediately to the calls to actions outlined in the report and to take tangible steps to deal with this crisis."

-30-

### **About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs**

*The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 per cent of*

*the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Ininew (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.*

**For more information, please contact:**

Andrew Thunder

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

**Email:** [athunder@manitobachiefs.com](mailto:athunder@manitobachiefs.com)

**Phone:** (204) 987-4139