



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The AMC offers condolences to the First Nations citizens who have lost their lives in recent Winnipeg Police involved shootings and calls for an investigation by the Manitoba Police Commission

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) Grand Chief Arlen Dumas offers condolences to the families and Nations of the First Nations citizens who have recently lost their lives due to recent shootings by Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) officers. The AMC also calls for an investigation by the Manitoba Police Commission into the structural causes of these violent incidents involving members of the WPS and First Nations citizens as a start to resolving the many unanswered questions and issues surrounding these incidents.

“On behalf of the entire Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, I offer sincere condolences and send a heartfelt tribute to the families and Nations of the three young people who have recently lost their lives due to WPS officer involved shootings,” said AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas. “Contrary to Danny Smyth, the Winnipeg Police Service’s Chief of Police, this loss of the lives of First Nations people by the WPS are not an ‘anomaly.’” Over the years, First Nations have been dehumanized, mistreated and have been killed through WPS officer involved shootings since before the J.J. Harper incident and the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry (AJI) in 1991. The scales of justice for First Nations in Winnipeg continue to be broken and need to be fixed immediately.”

The AMC agrees with the former WPS Chief of Police that the rates of First Nations involvement with the WPS, and Western law enforcement in general, is the result of deep seated First Nation socioeconomic disparities that are directly related to the history of colonialism in this country, and its impacts that have left First Nations people displaced and disposed within their own land in Winnipeg and elsewhere. The AJI, and most recently the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, found systemic racism underlies the dysfunction and the relationship with First Nations. That relationship is often characterized by disproportionate use of force by law enforcement and a disconnect between the rule of law, principles of justice, and human rights as they apply to First Nations peoples.

Grand Chief Dumas said, “the AMC does not have confidence in the Manitoba Independent Investigation Unit to conduct a full and complete investigation and disclosure of all the circumstances surrounding each of these shootings. In light of this, the AMC is calling on the civilian oversight committee, the Manitoba Police Commission, to work with the AMC to develop a terms of reference, as well as assisting to retain an investigator under its mandate to investigate the Winnipeg Police Board for its monitoring of the relationship between First Nations and the WPS. The AMC also recommends that this investigation look into the legislative gaps in the Manitoba Police Services Act that may be contributing factors to the deaths of these three young people and the ongoing race-based violence experienced by First Nations within the City of Winnipeg,” concluded Grand Chief Dumas.

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