



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMC deeply disappointed with Manitoba Hydro's *Corporate Social Responsibility Report*

Treaty One Territory – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Secretariat Inc. (AMC) issues this statement in regards to Manitoba Hydro's (Hydro) recent release of their *Corporate Social Responsibility Report* (the "Report"). The Report fails to include any meaningful First Nations representation and fails to acknowledge any corporate responsibility or plan for Reconciliation and relation-building with First Nations in Manitoba.

AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas stated, "It is astonishing and deeply disappointing that Hydro would seek to congratulate and pat themselves on the back on their self-proclaimed *Corporate Social Responsibility Report* while completely ignoring First Nations and the glaring issues that the AMC has brought to their attention on multiple occasions. What they have done is an exercise in shiny public relations rhetoric. They have avoided and denied any meaningful engagement, consultation or collaboration with First Nations in Manitoba."

Grand Chief Dumas added, "In light of recent corporate decisions to ignore First Nations concerns with respect to the uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 at the Keeyask Hydroelectric construction site, in light of the recent attempts of the Hydro CEO to smear elected First Nations leadership as irresponsible and spreading misinformation, and in light of the corporate decision to fight its own oversight Board for a special rate class for on-reserve customers amidst a pandemic, this Report is anything but socially responsible. There is no mention of a plan to respond to the recommendations of the Keeyask report into the prevalence of systemic racism at the construction site, or any mention of the report of the Clean Environment Commission that outlined the long and sordid history of misogyny, abuse and systemic anti-First Nations racism that has accompanied Hydro development for decades."

"Simply ignoring First Nations or attempting to brush us out of the way is unconscionable, and frankly, given the recent and ongoing issues with the uncontrolled Keeyask COVID-19 outbreaks, is just dangerous. From the perspective of the AMC, Hydro is far from socially responsible and in fact, they are irresponsible," concluded AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas.

Attachment

Brief Summary of the Report

- The Hydro "*Strategy 2040*" does not involve First Nations in any way, even though Hydro's work has always impacted First Nation territory;

- The recognition as one of Canada's "Best Diversity Employers" for the ninth consecutive year is misleading and still lacks any meaningful First Nation representation;
- There is no revenue sharing or meaningful water rental regime for First Nations, despite the Hydro responsibilities outlined in the Northern Flood Agreement and the historic and ongoing impact on First Nations lands and waters;
- To date, there still remain three (3) First Nations relying on diesel instead of hydro, with no plan to connect or extend the transmission lines;
- The Report goes on to highlight the Keeyask Generating System all while it is a COVID-19 hotspot which Hydro refuses to shut down putting Tataskweyak Cree Nation at risk every minute they remain open;
- Hydro supports social agencies such as the Salvation Army, but does not ensure social legacy projects that it is responsible for and promised in the Northern Flood Agreement
- The Report has no meaningful approach to Reconciliation, specifically with First Nations;
- Hydro contributes \$29,850 to *Indspire*, an organization which, as a pan-Indigenous organization, the AMC and AFN have identified issues of concern, while ignoring First Nations schools that are struggling during COVID-19;
- Hydro seek to engage outside cultural awareness practices that are not informed by First Nations in Manitoba;
- Hydro completely avoids mention of ongoing impacts to First Nations and ways they seek to address them: <https://thenarwhal.ca/state-of-erosion-the-legacy-of-manitoba-hydro/>;
- The Churchill River Diversion Interim license will soon become permanent and there is no mention of the duty to consult or of the free, prior and informed consent of those impacted First Nations, <https://www.aptnnews.ca/investigates/final-hope-for-those-impacted-by-churchill-river-diversion-possibly-to-be-snuffed-out/>
- Hydro completely avoids any mention of climate change despite the AMC's position and intervention at the Supreme Court of Canada.

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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 / Ininew (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.