



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **AMC statement on today's federal cabinet shuffle**

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) issues this statement in response to today's Federal Government Cabinet shuffle. The AMC expresses its concern with the timing of today's cabinet shuffle during the height of a pandemic, particularly with the high rates of transmission in various provinces and amongst First Nations people. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced adjustments to the government cabinet on January 12, 2021, with the appointment of Marc Garneau as Foreign Affairs Minister; Francois-Phillipe Champagne as Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry; Jim Carr as Special Representative to the Prairies; and Omar Alghabra as Transport Minister.

While AMC Grand Chief Dumas looks forward to working with the Ministers in their new roles, the sweeping First Nations issues across this country require dedicated and consistent attention to ensure progress. "We are in the midst of a pandemic that is causing complete shutdowns of businesses and services. We have high rates of transmission and deaths in the Manitoba region that require continued momentum to address. We created a First Nations Pandemic Coordination Response Team (PRCT) that relies on the quick response by the Federal Government. Therefore, I call on the new Ministers to ensure that this work continues and that the relationship between the Federal Crown and First Nations continue to be a priority for this government."

Grand Chief Dumas went on to state, "The Prime Minister has said on numerous occasions that there is no relationship more important to him than that between himself and Indigenous Peoples of this country. We need to hold him to his word. The lives of our First Nations people depend on it."

Grand Chief Dumas added, "I thank the Honourable Navdeep Bains for his work on behalf of First Nations in Manitoba while he was Minister of Innovation, Science, and Industry; and I welcome the new ISED Minister, the Honourable Francois-Phillippe Champagne, to a role that will be critical to pandemic recovery efforts and to First Nations industry and infrastructure."

"I am also pleased to see the Honourable Jim Carr rejoin Cabinet as the special representative to the Prairies," said Grand Chief Dumas. "I look forward to working with Minister Carr on advancing our shared priorities across our Treaty regions for the benefit of all Canadians. The new federal cabinet members must also continue to work closely with the First Nations leadership in Manitoba as we work together to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on First Nations and as we recover and restart economic empowerment initiatives. We will continue to maintain momentum, build on and create new opportunities, and ensure that all First Nations in Manitoba are empowered for self-determination."

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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), Anishininew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.