



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Responds to Auditor General Report on Manitoba's Failure to Implement the Path to Reconciliation Act

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) issues this statement in response to the Auditor General's Report regarding Manitoba's failure to take meaningful action to implement the *Path to Reconciliation Act* passed in 2016.

Following the release of the 94 Calls to Action in 2015 by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for all levels of government to immediately act in remedying the pervasive discrimination and structural violence that continues to stifle First Nations inherent rights, the Manitoba Legislature unanimously passed the *Path to Reconciliation Act* in 2016 as a local remedy to enact their commitment to honour the distinct needs of First Nations in the province. Unfortunately, measures to apply the full scope of this Act have not evolved in any meaningful way under Manitoba's current administration.

Acting Grand Chief Cornell McLean, Lake Manitoba First Nation stated, "The AMC is acutely aware of Manitoba's failure to take meaningful action on a path to reconciliation. In the past year, during this unprecedented crisis with the pandemic, First Nations people have experienced increased hardship as a result of Manitoba's failure to honour the spirit and intent of its own reconciliation agreements by failing to engage in meaningful consultation with First Nations people on pressing matters which impact their well-being."

The Auditor General's Report highlights 5 key recommendations that Manitoba should take to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to reconciliation. These include, taking action to develop an immediate strategy to fulfill its commitment to reconciliation; to engage all First Nations, Metis and Inuit sectors of government and citizens to implement the four principles of respect, engagement, understanding and union pertaining to nation-to-nation relations; to enlist the support of the Civil Service Commission to provide needed training to public servants on key legislation that protects First Nations; and, to provide translations of annual reporting on its progress in all 7 key languages in the region.

"The AMC has routinely requested that the Province of Manitoba engage First Nations in consultation long before developing or amending any policies or legislation that impacts First Nations citizens, and they routinely ignore these requests" continued Acting Grand Chief McLean.

In 2020, the Province of Manitoba introduced and passed *the Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act* (BITSA) which included sections that legalized the theft of \$338 million of Children's Special Allowance funds from First Nations children and youth in care of the provincial child and family services system and prevents those impacted from seeking legal action against Manitoba. Advocacy and demonstrations undertaken by the AMC to withdraw this violent legislation were ignored.

“Unfortunately, this is yet another example of many that demonstrates the provincial governments lack of commitment to implement the full scope of the *Path to Reconciliation Act*, and lack of efforts to engage in meaningful collaboration with First Nations” concluded Acting Grand Chief McLean.

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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.