



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMC Marks Human Rights Day 2021

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) marks Human Rights Day 2021 and the last day of 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence by promoting equality for all and demanding fair compensation for decades of human rights abuses. This year’s theme for Human Rights Day is *Equality – reducing inequalities, advancing human rights*. Today and every day, First Nations in Manitoba work towards reducing inequalities and the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence.

AMC Grand Chief Arlen Dumas stated, “On Human Rights Day 2021, the AMC issues a call to action on behalf of First Nations citizens for appropriate compensation for decades of human rights abuses they have endured in Canada. First Nations in this country have – as all Indigenous peoples around the world have -been subject to many forms of human rights abuses for hundreds of years, ranging from a government objective of outright cultural genocide to the willful and reckless federal underfunding of education and child welfare programs that have left our children and families damaged and at a severe disadvantage. There have also been colonial and racist pieces of federal legislation that govern the lives of all First Nations citizens in this country from cradle to grave. These are just a few examples however, and not a full accounting of the violations of First Nations’ human rights in the criminal justice system, the healthcare system or in everyday society where First Nations women, girls and gender-diverse peoples are murdered or go missing in disproportionate numbers.”

Grand Chief Dumas added, “although we have made some progress in advancing equality for First Nations citizens and in promoting and protecting their human rights in Manitoba and Canada, much more needs to be done to ensure that the original peoples of these lands are guaranteed the basic human rights.”

“Although Canada prides itself as a beacon of human rights on the world stage, First Nations by their experiences know that this is not accurate. It is not a true reflection of the colonial violence that displaced First Nations from the traditional territories and sacred lands. First Nations know that this colonial history is manifested in the ongoing poverty and human tragedy that is the reality of many First Nations people in this country. Canada is not a beacon of human rights when it ignores orders from its own Human Rights Tribunal and continues to fight First Nations children in court and deny full and adequate compensation for decades of discrimination.”

“Article 1 of the UDHR says, ‘All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.’ Sadly, this ideal has not been achieved for First Nations in Canada. But we have hope that there will be a just resolution to the violations of First Nations human rights and that the UDHR and true reconciliation can be fully realized,” 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 / Ininew (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.