



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AMC and AFN on the Anniversary of the Discovery of 215 Unmarked Burial Sites

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – Today, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Manitoba Region encourage First Nations and all citizens living on our territories to reflect on the 1-year anniversary of the discovery of the remains of 215 children at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School site by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc.

“We acknowledge those taking part in ceremony today and remember the precious children discovered by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépem. So many of our Elders have spoken about the atrocities committed by the Roman Catholic Church in Canada’s residential school institutions. Still, their truths were never fully recognized until the 215 graves were uncovered,” AMC Acting Grand Chief Cornell McLean said. “Unfortunately, with daily discoveries of more unmarked graves, many Elders and First Nations are reliving profound traumas. Our thoughts and prayers are with First Nations in Manitoba, such as Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, Sandy Bay Ojibway Nation, Pine Creek First Nation, and others across Canada, locating unmarked burial sites and finding their little ones who never made it home.”

The federal government is working toward fulfilling its duty to make reparations and uncover the hidden truths about its residential school institutions by committing \$320 million to search burial sites and programs to support survivors and their Nations. Canada also committed to appointing a Special Interlocutor on Residential Schools and Unmarked Graves, but no one has been named. Similarly, the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops has pledged \$30 million over five years to fund healing and reconciliation initiatives nationwide but has not provided details of the fundraising campaign.

“With the resources committed by federal and provincial governments, the work toward discovery, research, and commemoration are underway. However, we urge the federal and provincial governments and the Catholic Church to take accountability by fulfilling their outstanding commitments,” said AFN Regional Chief Cindy Woodhouse. “As we set aside time today to reflect on this 1-year anniversary and the subsequent discovery of over a thousand unmarked graves, it is important that we continue to recognize the tragic, heartbreaking devastation that the legacy of the Canadian residential school system continues to inflict upon First Nations.”

The Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line (1-866-925-4419) is available 24 hours a day for anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of their residential school experience.



For more information, please contact:

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