



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AMC reflects on the 151st Anniversary of Treaty 1 and Treaty 2

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba –The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) reflects on the 151st anniversary of Treaty 1 and 2.

Manitoba, which translates to the land where the Creator sits in Anishinaabe, is where First Nations and the British Crown signed Treaty 1 and 2 at the Lower Fort Garry on August 3rd and 21st, 1871, respectively. The First Nations signatories of the Treaties understood it as a partnership stemming from our sovereignty and an agreement to share our lands and traditional territories for the mutual benefit of the First Nations and the British Crown.

In exchange for large tracts of land, the Crown made many promises to the First Nations, including the right to education and maintaining hunting, trapping, and fishing rights in our territories as we have since time immemorial. Despite the promises made by the Crown, First Nations were forced to forfeit many rights and freedoms. The freedom to come and go from their communities, practice ceremonies, speak and teach their languages, practice cultural values and events, and the list goes on. The Crown did not translate this expectation adequately to the First Nations people, who signed under the promise and understanding that these lands would be shared, with our spirits intact, and our traditional rights granted by the Creator remaining.

On these anniversaries, we ask that the federal government honour the promises made during the signing of Treaty 1 and 2," said Acting Grand Chief Cornell McLean. "In keeping with their commitment to reconciliation, we expect the federal and provincial governments to increase their engagement and meaningful consultations with the Treaty 1 and 2 First Nations on critical infrastructure projects as outlined in these two Treaties."

It is well known among Manitoba First Nations that the Chiefs who signed these documents were led to believe false commitments and verbal promises not included in the Treaty texts. These agreements were meant to assist settlers in transitioning successfully onto these lands as neighbours, and they would not have survived without the assistance and resources of First Nations. First Nations were also looking for a way to adapt to a new way of life as drastic changes occurred on their lands and to provide security for future generations. We do not call this a misunderstanding; rather, it was a deliberate act meant to take the land and its resources, displacing First Nations, and forcing them to be under control by the Crown.

Today we remember the promises that were not honoured and the responsibility to uphold the original commitments of the Crown. The spirit of the Treaties envisioned a mutually beneficial relationship between First Nations and settlers, "for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the river flows." Further, they anticipated prosperity for all to coexist on this land. The AMC continues to advocate for Treaty 1 and 2 rights and calls for our Treaty partners to learn about the significance of these Treaties and the land they inhabit.

"The anniversary of Treaty 1 and 2 remind us that we are all Treaty people," concludes Acting Grand Chief Cornell McLean. "Even though we haven't benefited equally from the Treaties, we are committed to working together to strengthen First Nations and will continue to build capacity to grow our economies and business developments within Winnipeg and other urban centres. We encourage our Treaty partners to honour First Nations' traditional



stewardship of the land. As we continue to share our truths and advocate for change, there is hope for a positive Treaty relationship in the coming years."

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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.