



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS



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AMC and AFN Statement on appointment of Independent Special Interlocutor to work on protection of unmarked graves and burial sites near former Residential School Institutions

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Manitoba Region acknowledge the Government of Canada's announcement that an Independent Interlocutor has been appointed to work with Indigenous communities on the protection of unmarked graves and burial sites near Canada's Residential School Institutions.

AMC Acting Grand Chief Cornell McLean said, "First Nations welcome the independent, impartial, and non-partisan work to be carried out through this appointment and encourage Canada to reflect on its true history and shameful past related to the Residential School institutions. To move forward in the true spirit of reconciliation, we expect First Nations to guide the Independent Interlocutor's approach to ensure it appropriately honours the memory of our children who never made it home from Residential School Institutions."

Kimberly Murray, a Mohawk woman from Quebec, has been appointed as the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial sites associated with Indian Residential Schools. She is expected to work in collaboration with Indigenous leaders, communities, Survivors, families, and experts to identify a new federal legal framework to ensure the respectful and culturally appropriate treatment and protection of unmarked graves and burial sites of children at former Residential School Institutions. The appointment and the work of the Independent Special Interlocutor will be supported by a proposed investment which was announced in the 2022 Federal Budget of \$10.4 million over two years.

"The federal appointment of an Independent Special Interlocutor is a crucial step toward justice for First Nations, and we are encouraged to see an Indigenous woman in this role." said AMC Acting Grand Chief Cornell McLean. "However, it is imperative that the individuals and institutions responsible for the reprehensible crimes and human rights violations associated with Residential School Institutions are held fully accountable for their genocidal intent."

The AFN has called for the United Nations Human Rights Commission to appoint a Special Rapporteur to investigate human rights violations and crimes and has asked the International Criminal Court to investigate and hold all parties responsible for Residential Institutions accountable for crimes against humanity.

AFN Regional Chief Cindy Woodhouse said, "An independent and impartial investigation into the genocide committed in the Residential Institutions located on our Treaty Lands and Traditional Territories must be conducted for real accountability to occur. The legacy of Canadian Residential School Institutions is of tragedy and devastation, and while we are supportive of a process that works toward discovery, research, and commemoration, we remind the federal government that for truth and reconciliation to advance in a meaningful

way, Canada's accountability must include justice for the crimes committed against First Nations and our children."

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For more information, please contact:

Communications Team
Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
Email: media@manitobachiefs.com

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.