

CONFEDERACY OF TREATY SIX FIRST NATIONS



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(amiskwaciwâskahikan) The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations Chiefs were shocked and concerned to hear about the findings of a mass grave at the site of the Kamloops Indian Residential School in Kamloops, BC.

“We are grieved to hear of the children that were found in a mass grave in Tk’emlups. The children were someone’s daughter, son or grandchild who never returned home. This is very devastating, and our hearts go out to the families and communities.” said Grand Chief Vernon Watchmaker. The Indian Residential School has impacted the wellbeing of our People and Nations, healing from this traumatic experience is continuous and inter-generational.

“The children were denied their last moments away from family who loved and cherished them. The families were denied to right to grieve, and to follow through with customary burial practices.” said Grand Chief Vernon Watchmaker

“This finding has been nothing short of triggering, traumatic and painful. When violence as devastating as this is exposed, it is incredibly traumatic for our collective Nations, Nation members, and all who are impacted by the horrific truths of Canada’s genocide.

A mass grave of 215 children was discovered on the site of one of their Indian Residential Schools, and Canada continues to fly their flag high, and no national standstill to mourn. This is Canada and the Crowns legacy, and it reminds us of the difficulty in achieving any reconciliation. Particularly, where the federal government has yet to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #76 that deals specifically with these types of atrocious events.

My thoughts and prayers are with the star beings found, the Nation of Tk’emlups, and all of our families, more so those whose family is missing a child who was illegally taken and never came home.” said Chief Germaine Anderson of Beaver Lake Cree Nation.

These schools existed here in Alberta, where mass graves and unmarked graves have been located. We call upon provincial and federal governments to immediately implement an action plan with Treaty First Nations, to locate graves so that proper cultural protocols are made to honour and remember our deceased children and people.

We extend deepest condolences to the communities impacted, and to those who have been pained by this tragedy. We ask our citizens to smudge, offer a prayer or song to honour the spirit of the deceased and the communities who are grieved.

For anyone that is having difficulty dealing with this, please remember that it is important to reach out and talk to someone. Please access the residential school crisis line at [1-866-925-4419](tel:1-866-925-4419), it is open and available for those seeking support. Further, you may also access referral services that are available in your area.”

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