



STATEMENT

One-year Anniversary of Discovery at Kamloops Indian Residential School

Nemaska, Eeyou Istchee (May 27, 2022) – This week marked the one-year anniversary of the announcement of the grim discovery of a mass grave of children at the Kamloops Indian Residential School. We affirm our support and recognition of the Tkemlúps te Secwépemc First Nation and recognize the Tkemlúps Kukpi7 (Chief) Chief Rosanne Casimir for leading her people through these difficult times.

The revelations from Kamloops, and the thousands of unmarked graves discovered across the country over the past year, have caused a resurgence of pain and anguish for those that experienced the genocidal actions of these institutions run by churches and previous governments. We knew then that the discovery in Kamloops would not be an isolated event –several thousand children’s unmarked graves have been found since– and we knew that things would get more challenging for residential school survivors as news broke of each new discovery. We recognize that the pain over the legacy of residential schools in our communities has been growing over the past year. As the remains of Indigenous children are found at other sites across the country and the prospect that we may find the bodies of more innocent children in our own community, we will continue to honour and show compassion to those who endured the horrors of this tragic past.

We all have a part to play as another critical step on our journey towards reconciliation will take place with the upcoming visit from Pope Francis to Canada in July to issue an apology for the Catholic Church’s role in these genocidal acts and assimilation policies. As we continue to uncover the truth, we reiterate our commitment to support the healing of the deep scars caused by the impacts of residential schools to our many relatives and fellow community members who are survivors. Let us stand in solidarity with survivors of residential schools and their families as they continue on their healing journey.

Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty

Deputy Grand Chief Norman A. Wapachee

Contact Information:

Flora Weistche, Political Attachée

Telephone: 514-604-3276

Email: flora.weistche@cngov.ca