



## Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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### **A New Day: MKO Encourages Actions to Advance Reconciliation on July 1, 2022**

***Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB*** – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is issuing the following statement ahead of July 1, recognized as Canada Day, as we continue to grapple with the loss of thousands of children due to residential schools throughout the country.

#### **Grand Chief Garrison Settee states:**

“There are questions around how we can mark July 1. Last year, there were events such as the ‘No Pride in Genocide’ rally held in lieu of Canada Day festivities. We witnessed hundreds of people across the province showing up in orange to express their grief and solidarity with First Nations as we come to terms with the ongoing announcements of our children being found in unmarked graves.

As we approach July 1, 2022, I want all Canadians to know—there will be more children found, including children right here in Manitoba. As we approach Canada Day, I’m asking all Canadians to continue to advance the dialogue on reconciling with Canada’s extremely dark past. Keep an open mind and ensure to listen to First Nations voices when thinking about the current impact the residential school system has on First Nations communities, citizens, and especially on our children.

Today, I ask you to stand with Indigenous people as we continue to mourn the loss of our innocent children. This is not an issue that is going to be resolved overnight. I ask you to spend time with an Elder and make time to learn about the real history of First Nations people in Canada. Learn about our rich and vibrant culture, challenge the stereotypes, and become an ally.

The Forks is a well-loved meeting place in Treaty One territory, Winnipeg. I commend the Forks for making space for the important conversations that we need to advance reconciliation. They have changed the branding on their events for July 1 to “A New Day,” to create space for these conversations and for learning. MKO supports these efforts.

Those who wish to criticize the actions of the Forks demonstrate a mindset that perpetuates colonialism. This reflects a superiority complex we are trying to get away from and it is unfortunately not conducive to reconciliation.

It is important we continue to talk about and share our knowledge of the legacy of residential schools. The impact of the schools continues to affect both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. The healing work must continue.

MKO encourages all Canadians to learn more about Canada's history with First Nations people. Read the reports from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and learn their 94 Calls to Action. Work on some of those Calls to Action. Do what you can to make a difference. Share your knowledge with other people.

Working together, we can build a much better country. Let's work together to create a country we can all be proud to celebrate together."

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