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Office of Grand Chief Garrison Settee

October 26, 2021

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

RE: National Inquiry into the Sixties Scoop and Removal of Indigenous Children

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

Most parents and grandparents would agree that our children are the heart of any nation. The relationship we have with children—the most vulnerable beings of all—is the most important and reflective of our values as a society. Canada has a troubling and sinister history in the treatment of First Nations children and families. The Sixties Scoop is no exception.

As a result of deliberate government policies in Canada, from approximately 1951 to 1982, thousands of Indigenous children were “scooped” from their families and placed in non-Indigenous homes. It has been estimated that there were more than 20,000 First Nations children who were taken from their families and communities; however, Survivors and their families believe that this number is much higher, nor does it include Métis and non-Status children forcibly taken from their homes.

In a recent joint press release with the 60s Scoop Legacy of Canada, former Senator, Judge, and Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Honourable Murray Sinclair said:

“The magnitude of the removal of children in Canada has not yet been measured. It ought to be. It is likely that the Canadian numbers are proportionately as high. A study or an inquiry to look into the issue is needed not merely to measure the magnitude of the sin or the names of the sinners but to respond to the suggestion that the child removal system was saving the children from incapable families.”

There is merit to the suggestion that any incapacities of the families were a result of the actions of the government, such as 100 years of Indian Residential Schools, and systemic and outright racism. If so, it would be manifestly unfair to allow the perpetrator of an historical injustice to wrap itself in the saviour’s cloak. The children who were removed need to know they are not alone, but they also need to know that there were reasons for what happened that were not of their parents’ making.”

In August 2021, the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Chiefs-in-Assembly unanimously voted in support of *Resolution #2021-08-01 Rev 1.0: Call for National Inquiry into The Sixties Scoop and Permanent Removal of First Nations Children by the Government of Canada*. It is crucial that we examine and document the truths of Survivors and families of the Sixties Scoop/First Nations child removal; provide tangible and necessary support for adoptees and former Crown Wards and their families; and bring healing to our people and communities.

Therefore, the Chiefs of MKO call for the Government of Canada to commission a national, Survivor-led inquiry into the Sixties Scoop and removal of First Nations children. We support the call from the 60s Scoop Legacy of Canada for a formal apology to Survivors and families impacted by the Sixties Scoop and permanent child removal.

As Prime Minister of Canada, we anticipate your support for Sixties Scoop Survivors and urge you to direct your support for a National Inquiry to both Ministers for Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada and Indigenous Services Canada as a key area of focus, and to prioritize this in their 100-day plan.

Your office may connect with me about this matter by reaching out to my assistant Ted Bland by phone at 431-275-2428 or by email: ted.bland@mkonorth.com

Yours truly,



Grand Chief Garrison Settee
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

Encl: Resolution #2021-08-01 Rev 1.0: Call for National Inquiry into The Sixties Scoop and Permanent Removal of First Nations Children by the Government of Canada

cc: *MKO First Nations
Katherine Legrange, Director, 60s Scoop Legacy of Canada
National Chief RoseAnne Archibald, Assembly of First Nations
Grand Chief Arlen Dumas, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, Southern Chiefs' Organization
Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services
Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations*

