



MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL
RALLIEMENT NATIONAL DES MÉTIS

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TRC Must Seek Justice for Métis Residential School Survivors ***MNC President Chartier calls on Truth and Reconciliation Commission to hold Governments and Churches to Account***

Ottawa, ON -- Métis National Council (MNC) President Clément Chartier today congratulated the new Commissioners recently appointed to the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Speaking at a ceremony celebrating the appointments, held today at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, QC, President Chartier wished Commissioners Justice Murray Sinclair, Marie Wilson, and Chief Wilton Littlechild the best as they begin working on the Commission's 5-year mandate documenting the experiences of Residential School survivors.

"I wish you all the courage and strength needed to take on a challenging mandate," said Chartier. "An important part of which must be the search for justice for the vast majority of Métis survivors who have been excluded from past settlements."

A relatively small number of Métis survivors attended Federal Indian Residential Schools and are eligible for compensation under the settlement agreement. The vast majority, several thousand, went to schools not covered and have been denied any compensation for their experiences in residential schools.

"Survivors of these schools endured the same forced separation from family and community, the same dislocation from the land, the same attacks on their culture and way of life, and in many instances, were victims for the same physical, sexual and psychological abuse," Chartier told the Commissioners. "Yet no one – neither the Federal nor any Provincial government, or any of the churches and religious orders which ran the schools – has stepped forward to take responsibility."

President Chartier called on the Commissioners to ensure the exclusion of Métis Survivors from compensation is fully investigated. He also called on the Federal and Provincial Governments, and Church officials to explain their role in Métis residential schools before the Commission.

"The Truth and Reconciliation Commission represents an opportunity to ensure the healing journey isn't taken just by some survivors but by all survivors," said Chartier. "Until the exclusion of these Métis survivors is dealt with openly and honestly, until responsibility is taken and the harm done to Métis survivors and Métis communities is fully acknowledged, it will remain an undeniable and persistent obstacle to true healing and a lasting reconciliation between Canada and the Métis Nation."

For more information contact Greg Taylor, MNC Communications, at (613) 296-9263 or gregt@metisnation.ca.

The MNC represents the Métis Nation in Canada at the national and international level. The Métis Nation's homeland includes the 3 Prairie Provinces and extends into Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and the northern United States. There are approximately 350,000 – 400,000 Métis Nation citizens in Canada, roughly a quarter of all Aboriginal peoples in the country.