



TRC RELEASES INTERIM REPORT AND HISTORICAL PUBLICATION

February 24, 2012 – Vancouver, BC - The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) released today its *Interim Report*. Additionally, the TRC also launched a new historical publication entitled; *They Came for the Children: Canada, Aboriginal Peoples, and Residential Schools*.

The *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Interim Report*, reflects activities undertaken by the Commission since June 2009 and provides 20 recommendations that touch on five key areas including the operation of the Commission, education, support for survivors, reconciliation and commemoration. It represents a brief summary of what the Commissioners have heard directly from as many as three thousand former students and staff who were most affected by the schools.

“The truth about the Residential School system will cause many Canadians to see their country differently,” said TRC Chair, Justice Murray Sinclair, while speaking at Simon Fraser University’s, Morris J Wosk Centre for Dialogue. “These are hard truths that we need to acknowledge in order to lay the foundation for reconciliation.”

“We have this incredible opportunity before us to develop and nurture relations of mutual respect between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians,” commented Chief Wilton Littlechild, TRC Commissioner. “Residential schools operated in Canada for well over a century. In the same way, the reconciliation process will have to span generations. It will take time to re-establish respect. It will take time and commitment to reverse this legacy.”

As part of its mandate obligation, the Commission also released today a new historical publication. *They Came for the Children* examines more than 100 years of history, purpose, operation, and supervision of the residential school system, the effect and consequences of the system, and its ongoing legacy.

Findings include:

- Residential Schools constituted an assault on Aboriginal children, families, self-governing Aboriginal nations and culture. The impacts of the Residential School system were immediate, and have been ongoing since the earliest years of the schools.
- Canadians have been denied a full and proper education as to the nature of Aboriginal societies, and the history of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.



During the announcement, TRC Commissioner Marie Wilson presented the first copy of *They Came for the Children* to the Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Minister of Education, Government of the Northwest Territories.

“It is our hope that this resource will serve a useful, ongoing purpose in furthering efforts to educate Canadians about this part of our history,” said TRC Commissioner Marie Wilson.

In response, Minister Lafferty stated “The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes that the issues surrounding the legacy of residential schools in the Northwest Territories are of vital significance to all people. Through curriculum and teaching resources, we are ensuring that all students, teachers and education resource staff in the NWT education system achieve an understanding of the residential school era and its legacy in our history.”

Copies of the *TRC Interim Report* and *They Came for the Children* are available on the TRC website at www.trc.ca.

To request hard copies please call toll free 1-888-872-5554.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was created as part of the 2007 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement to inform all Canadians about the legacy of Indian Residential Schools, and inspire a process of reconciliation and renewed relationships based on mutual understanding and respect.

For more information:

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