



## **TRC TO HOLD URBAN INUIT HEARING IN OTTAWA, AUGUST 16, 2012**

August 14, 2012 – The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) is inviting Ottawa’s urban Inuit to share their unique perspectives on the residential school system at a community hearing to be held Thursday, August 16.

Commissioner Dr. Marie Wilson will hear directly from Inuit Residential School Survivors about their experiences and the impacts of the schools on their lives and communities.

The Urban Inuit Community Hearing will also provide an opportunity to Ottawa residents and Canadians as a whole to gain a better appreciation of the continuing collective trauma that residential schools inflicted on Inuit peoples and their children – a chance to bear witness to the legacy of Canada’s residential school system for Inuit peoples.

According to Commissioner Wilson, Inuit children’s experience of the residential schools differed in some important ways from the experiences of First Nations and Métis children in southern Canada. “Some lived in what were referred to as tent hostels despite the bitter winters,” she said. “And the distances from home communities were enormous; some children from northern Quebec were sent all the way to Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories.”

As Inuk Survivor Marius Tungilik has put it, “We weren’t home in residential school. We were far away from home, very far away, emotionally, geographically and spiritually. We were so far away. Sometimes we thought we were never going home again.”

The Urban Inuit Community Hearing is being co-hosted by the Tungasuvvingat Inuit’s Mamisarvik Healing Center, and will take place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Rideau Room (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) of the Sheraton Hotel, 150 Albert Street.

Ottawa is home to a cohesive community of more than 1,000 Inuit, bound by their diverse shared culture, language, values and traditions. Inuit come to Ottawa for access to medical and other services unavailable in their home communities – a constant reminder of the continued displacement of Inuit from their homelands.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established as a result of the 2007 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Its mandate is to inform all Canadians about the 150-year history of the residential schools, and guide and inspire a process of reconciliation and renewed relationships based on mutual understanding and respect.

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