



Press Statement

CAP: Hold CSC Leadership Accountable for Obstruction, Discrimination

September 9, 2020 (Ottawa, ON) – On August 19th, the panel of experts convened to investigate the use of Structured Intervention Units (SIUs) used in Canadian prisons released a scathing report detailing how their work was obstructed, undermined and blocked by Correction Services Canada (CSC). The panel has now disbanded and will not be able to complete its work to ensure safety for prisoners in Canada.

CSC Commissioner Anne Kelly has responsibility within the public service for the actions of her department, and for implementing the policies set out by cabinet. The refusal to cooperate with this panel violates the mandate of the SIU implementation program, and risks continued use of extended, punitive solitary confinement that has been labelled as “torture” by the United Nations.

“We are seeing a systemic failure at every level in the correction system” said Kim Beaudin, National Vice Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.

The refusal to cooperate with the SIU follows on top of reports by the Correctional Investigator about the ongoing rise in share of Indigenous people in prisons, the failure to expedite releases of prisoners due to COVID-19, and a failure to implement oversight promised in 2018 relating to suicide in prisons.

“If Commissioner Kelly cannot or will not address the systemic racism in the federal Corrections system, then someone must be appointed who can make the sweeping changes necessary” says Kim Beaudin. “It’s time to defund prisons and put the money towards community care and real safety for Indigenous people instead”

According to the most recent departmental report¹, CSC currently oversees a budget of approximately \$2.5 Billion and 17,800 staff across the department, with only \$157 million and 233 staff allocated towards community supervision activities.

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For media interviews please contact:

Kim Beaudin, Vice Chief

306-717-1429

K.beaudin@abo-peoples.org

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is the national voice representing the interests of Métis, status and non-status Indians, and Southern Inuit Indigenous People living off-reserve. Today, over 70% of Indigenous people live off-reserve.

¹ <https://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/publications/005007-2608-en.shtml>