



Press Statement

String of Saskatchewan Inmate Deaths Undermines Confidence in Corrections

August 20, 2020 (Ottawa, ON) –

In March, Curtis McKenzie died of suicide while in Corrections Services Canada custody at Saskatchewan Penitentiary. On August 16th, 2020, Chris Teniskishayinew died of suicide while in custody in the Regina Correctional Institute.

Since July, Saskatchewan Corrections and Policing has acknowledged the deaths of 4 inmates at Regina Corrections Center and the Pine Grove Corrections Center. Corrections Services Canada further acknowledged the death of 1 inmate at Saskatchewan Penitentiary in July.

“While the government talks about reconciliation, Indigenous people are dying in custody every time you turn around” Said Kim Beaudin, CAP National Vice Chief. “Mental health, physical health and cultural rights are not luxuries, they keep people alive.”

The CAP-Daniels Decision of 2016 established that non-Status and Metis Indigenous people are “Indians” under S.91(24) of the Constitution, and are therefore an area of federal responsibility.

“Federal and provincial authorities must take action to ensure that Indigenous lives and Indigenous rights are protected in custody” said Kim Beaudin.

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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.