



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT FROM CONGRESS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES
NATIONAL CHIEF RE: UNMARKED GRAVES FOUND IN
PENELAKUT TRIBAL TERRITORY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

(OTTAWA, ON. July 13, 2021) Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) National Chief Elmer St. Pierre has voiced his support for the Penelakut Tribe and their allies as well as all Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island upon the discovery of more than 160 undocumented and unmarked graves in the area that was home to the Kuper Island Residential School (The Missionary Oblates of Mary the Immaculate).

“I would like to express my condolences and support to the peoples of the Penelakut Tribe. It is clear that Canada is only in the beginning stages of this public reckoning with their history of the residential schools. With that in mind I would like to remind all of our relations across Turtle Island to check in with one another and hold each other up as we endure another painful week hearing about our peoples shared tragedy with these schools in the news all across the globe.”

On Thursday July 15th, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation is expected to release a detailed report of their findings of the estimated 215 remains of children at a former residential school. This is almost two months since their findings have sparked a national movement and reckoning. It is expected that within this report their will be statements from survivors of this residential school.

On page 2 of this release, please find a number of resources to find support if you are a former residential school student in distress or have been affected by the residential school system and need help.

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The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is the federally recognized National Indigenous Organization that represents off-reserve status and non-status Indians, Metis and Southern Inuit Aboriginal Peoples. Over 80% of Indigenous people in Canada live off-reserve.

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WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT:

If you are a former residential school student in distress, or have been affected by the residential school system and need help, you can contact the 24-hour **Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line** at **1-866-925-4419**, or the [Indian Residential School Survivors Society](#) with the toll free line at **1-800-721-0066**.

Additional mental-health support and resources for Indigenous people are [available here](#).