

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Statement

**CAP Saddened by Anti-Democratic Lateral Violence from MMF
on National Day of Truth and Reconciliation**

October 1st 2021 (Ottawa, ON) – Yesterday marked the first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. This day represented a historic milestone calling on all Canadians to acknowledge the long and ongoing history of efforts to erase Indigenous identity.

On this same day, David Chartrand, President of the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF), made false and inflammatory statements about the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) and the membership of its Provincial Territorial Organizations (PTO) in a story reported by APTN. The context of the story was the breakup of the Métis National Council (MNC) over MMF disagreements with the other members of the MNC.

Chartrand was quoted attacking the legitimacy of CAP as a representative of Indigenous interests¹. His statement is refuted by the 50-year history of CAP as a force for Indigenous rights in Canada. It is false as shown by the Supreme Court “CAP-Daniels” decision that acknowledged CAP’s Métis and non-Status constituents as Indigenous people, and important victories such as the inclusion of Indigenous people in the constitution in 1981 thanks to the work of former CAP leader Harry Daniels.

“We are saddened that the leadership of the MMF would use lateral violence on this day to try and erase the identity of hundreds of thousands of Indigenous people across Canada. This is meant to be a day for truth and reconciliation, not falsehoods and division” said Elmer St Pierre, CAP National Chief. “While MMF is experiencing organizational challenges, they cannot find a better cause than to join forces with colonial efforts to erase our identity and attack efforts to exercise our right to self-determination.”

“The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is the federally-recognized National Indigenous Organization that represents communities of off-reserve Status and non-Status Indians, Métis and Southern Inuit Aboriginal Peoples. CAP’s constituents are often labelled the “forgotten peoples”, due to our exclusion from engagement and consultation on policies impacting our rights, interests, and needs” said Kim Beaudin, CAP National Vice-Chief.

In submissions to government, CAP has repeatedly informed policymakers that the MNC does not represent the rights, needs or interests of Métis communities that are not affiliated with the MNC, and cannot speak for the entirety of Métis people in Canada. Regardless of any false or defamatory statements, CAP will continue to fight for all communities of off-reserve Status and non-Status Indians, Métis and Southern Inuit Aboriginal Peoples across Canada.

¹ <https://www.aptnnews.ca/national-news/historic-moment-for-the-Métis-nation-as-end-of-political-order-arrives-after-30-years-says-history-prof/>

For media interviews please contact:

Jessica Dawson, Executive Assistant

613-747-6022

j.dawson@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.