



Truth and  
Reconciliation  
Commission of Canada

For the child taken,  
For the parent left behind.

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## Union of BC Municipalities

Vancouver Convention Centre  
September 22, 2015

Presentation By  
**Dr. Marie Wilson**  
**Commissioner, TRC of Canada**



Truth and  
Reconciliation  
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## T&R Commission begins public work

- 2007: Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement creates historic Commission.
- 2009: Three new Commissioners named



***‘Witnessing the Future’***  
launch event, Rideau Hall,  
October 2009

Governor General Michaëlle  
Jean inducted: first “TRC  
Honorary Witness”

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## Survivors as TRC “owners” & Advisors



### TRC Survivors Committee:

- Eugene Arcand, Madeleine Basile, John Banksland, Terri Brown, John Morrisseau, Lottie May Johnson, Barney Williams Jr., Gordon Williams, Rebekah Uqi Williams, Doris Young

### Inuit Sub-commission:

- Jennifer Hunt-Poitras & Robbie Watt

## Oral History - Statement Gathering



### TRC Hearings

- 77 communities
- 7 National Events
- 240 hearing days
- 7,000 statements
- 2/3 were public
- 1/3 private: 65% of private gave permission to use for public education purposes

## Public Response to TRC & Survivors



### Attendance:

**National Events:** 155,500 (est.)

**Regional Events:** 5,000 (Victoria)  
1,000 (Whitehorse)

**Education Days:** 14,300 students

**Online:** 68 countries; >250,000 views

### National Events:

1. **RESPECT:** Winnipeg, June 2010
2. **COURAGE:** Inuvik, June-July 2011
3. **LOVE:** Halifax, October, 2011
4. **TRUTH:** Saskatoon, June, 2012
5. **HUMILITY:** Montreal, April, 2013
6. **HONESTY:** Vancouver, Sept. 2013
7. **WISDOM:** Edmonton, March, 2014



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## TRC Honorary Witnesses: What & Why?





## Documenting & Remembering

- **2012- Publication:**
  - They Came for the Children
  - TRC Interim Report
- **2012-2014- Commemoration:**
  - \$20 million Fund
  - 143 Projects:
    - Community & Regional
    - National
- **2014- Documentation:**
  - National Centre for Truth & Reconciliation (NCTR)
- **2015- Validation & Conclusion:**
  - TRC Calls to Action
  - The Survivors Speak
  - What We Have Learned: Principles of Reconciliation
  - Honouring the Past: Reconciling for the Future



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## TRC Conclusions

### PRINCIPLES OF RECONCILIATION:

1. UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples is **framework for reconciliation**
2. First Nations, Inuit & Metis peoples have Treaty, **constitutional and Treaty rights that must be recognized & respected.**

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## PRINCIPLES OF RECONCILIATION:

3. Reconciliation is **process of healing relationships** that requires public truth sharing, apology, commemoration & redress of past harms.
4. Reconciliation **requires action to address destructive impacts** on Aboriginal education, language & culture, health, child welfare, administration of justice, economic opportunity & prosperity.

## PRINCIPLES OF RECONCILIATION:

5. Reconciliation must create **more equitable society, closing gaps** in social, health & economic outcomes.
6. **All Canadians are Treaty peoples & share responsibility** for mutually respectful relationships.

## PRINCIPLES OF RECONCILIATION:

7. Perspectives of **Aboriginal Elders & Knowledge Keepers** re concepts & practices of reconciliation are **vital** to long-term reconciliation.
8. **Aboriginal cultural revitalization**, & integration of Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols & connection to land are **essential to reconciliation process**

## PRINCIPLES OF RECONCILIATION:

9. Reconciliation **requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, transparency, & investment of resources**
10. Reconciliation requires **sustained public education, dialogue, & youth engagement** about history & legacy of residential schools, Treaties & aboriginal rights, & past and present contributions of Indigenous peoples to Canadian society.

## TRC Final Report & Calls to Action

- History of Schools
- The Missing Children
- School Legacy issues:
  - Education
  - Culture and Language
  - Spirituality
  - Health
  - Justice
  - Governance
  - Poverty
  - The Missing & Murdered
  - Child Welfare
- Reconciliation



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## Messages for BC Municipalities & All Local Governments

- TRC heard unprecedented outpouring of Indigenous citizens
- Recurring messages:
  - Student-on-student abuse was much higher than anyone expected.
  - Abuses of residential schools also happened in 'day schools'.
  - Absent, or negatively-stereotyped, content about Indigenous people also happened in public schools...affecting all of us.
  - Legacy of residential schools continues at community level
    - Discrimination, second-rate education, limited opportunity
    - Family and community violence and abuse
    - Continuing child apprehension & 'incarceration'
    - Missing & murdered Indigenous women and men
    - Impatience and/or disregard by non-Indigenous population.
- Education, relationship building & healing has to continue at *all* community levels, including among elected leadership

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## Calls to Action for Municipalities

- Provinces & local communities now hold or share many previously federal authorities, eg. health, education, child welfare, housing
- Mayors, together with all municipal & provincial leadership, need to become familiar with TRC Conclusions
- **94 TRC recommendations** are known as **Calls to Action**
- Available at: [www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca)
- Nearly half TRC Calls to Action require specific effort by Provinces:
  - most of these in collaboration with Indigenous leaders
  - some in collaboration with delegated municipal governments
- **16 Calls for Municipalities and/or All Levels of Government:**
  - 3 Legacy: 17, 23, 40, (41, related)
  - 13 Reconciliation: 43, 47, 55, 57, 64, 75, 76, 77, 82, 87, 88, 91, 92

## Legacy Calls to Action: 'Cleaning Up the Mess'

- **Child welfare:** reduce # of children in care; culturally based parenting programs; cultural competency training for professionals
- **Education:** strategy for employment & education gaps; culturally-based early childhood education
- **Language & Culture:** affordable reclaiming of personal names
- **Health:** increase # and retention of Aboriginal health professionals; cultural competency training for all care providers.
- **Justice:** creation & evaluation of Aboriginal-specific victim programs & services; public inquiry into disproportionate victimization of Aboriginal women & girls, including missing and murdered, & links to intergenerational legacy of residential schools



## Reconciliation Calls To Action: 'New Start'

- **UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples:** adopt and implement as framework for ongoing reconciliation
- **Doctrine of Discovery:** repudiate, & reform policies/bylaws that may rely on concepts of European sovereignty
- **National Council for Reconciliation:** Monitor & report progress on “the legacy gaps”; relevant annual data provided by **all levels of government**
- **Professional Development:** educate public servants re residential schools, UNDRIP, Treaties, anti-racism, intercultural competency, human rts.
- **Education:** publicly-funded denominational schools to teach comparative religious studies, including Aboriginal spiritual beliefs

## Reconciliation Calls To Action: 'New Start'

- **Missing Children, Commemoration & Monuments:** collaborate to identify, maintain, honour & commemorate gravesites of missing residential school children; support National Day for Truth & Reconciliation; **Install visible IRS monument in capital cities**
- **Nat'l Centre for T & R (NCTR):** provide relevant archival records
- **Indigenous Sports:** educate public re athletic history & champions; support Indigenous athletic development & competitions; respect Indigenous territorial protocols & involvement of Indigenous communities in event planning & participation
- **Business & Reconciliation:** municipalities as incorporated entities, that deal with many other businesses; adopt UNDRIP & apply to policy & land considerations; relationship-building & consultation; informed consent on development projects; access to jobs, training, professional development

## TRC Is Ending... Reconciliation Is Just Beginning !



- Reconciliation will require the leadership & sustained efforts of ***all levels of government***, including Municipalities.
- Reconciliation will require the continuous efforts of ***Indigenous & public leaders working together***

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Reconciliation...towards a new relationship

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