



## **Plans Set to Bring Together Canadians, Create Greater Awareness and Understanding at TRC National Event in Winnipeg**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winnipeg – Plans are set to bring together Canadians, survivors and their families, former school staff and others affected by the Indian Residential Schools (IRS) experience in Winnipeg, Manitoba at The Forks, June 16 –19, for the first National Event of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC).

“We are holding the National Event to listen to survivors and all those affected by residential schools,” said Justice Murray Sinclair, TRC Chair. “However, we want to reach out to the larger community as well, to provide opportunities for healing and greater awareness. By sharing these experiences will we truly understand them, and in the process, help future generations move forward with respect.”

At the Winnipeg National Event, those wishing to share their experiences with the TRC will have the option to give a private statement in a confidential setting. Those who wish to have their history recorded will have the option to have their statement video or audio recorded. Health supports will be available on site to assist anyone who may be experiencing emotional or traumatic difficulty.

“We encourage survivors, and those whose lives have been impacted by the schools to come forward during the gathering, and to feel safe opening up about their IRS experiences with the Commission,” said Justice Sinclair. “Once these truths are known, they will form a part of our country’s historical record.”

In addition, traditional healing and meditation practices will be offered, along with opportunities for the community to provide gestures of reconciliation. Church representatives will be available as well to promote a fuller understanding of the impacts the schools have had, and continue to have on those involved.

Additional programming will be available in other venues in addition to The Forks. The Winnipeg Art Gallery will host an exhibit and Manitoba Theatre for Young People will feature programming including a world premiere by playwright Ian Ross.

Various musical artists, including Blue Rodeo, Buffy Sainte-Marie and Susan Aglukark will add their voices to the call for healing and understanding the impacts of residential schools. The official program begins with the Lighting of the Sacred Fire and Pipe Ceremony on June 16, and concludes on June 19 with a traditional powwow. Other event highlights include a performance by Inuit throat singers and a Métis Jamboree.

Additional information about the TRC and the Winnipeg National Event program is available at [www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca), or by calling 1 (888) TRC-5554.



The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established as a result of the 2007 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Its mandate is to inform all Canadians about what happened in the 150 year history of the residential schools, and guide and inspire a process of reconciliation and renewed relationships based on mutual understanding and respect.

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