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Sovereign Nations of Treaty No. 8

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT FROM CHIEFS OF THE SOVEREIGN NATIONS OF TREATY NO. 8

Kenney's statement is harmful and furthers divide between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples

July 1, 2021 (Treaty 8 Territory) - On June 30, the Town of Morinville woke up to find a beloved historical building and place of worship had burned to the ground. We have many brothers and sisters in Treaty No. 6 Territory who have frequented this church for weddings, funerals, and their own worship. Especially our neighbours in Alexander First Nation, who use the town of Morinville as a hub for school, grocery shopping and attend the church.

What has deeply saddened and even angered our communities, is the quick response from the Alberta Premier, Jason Kenney. The premier jumped to the site of the charcoaled building to declare the fire was a 'hate crime' in a polished video and posted to social media. This was a surprise to many Albertans and Indigenous communities who had not heard from the RCMP the official cause of the fire. Further, we have yet to see Kenney react the same way to speak with Muslim women who have been attacked numerous times as of recent, nor has he visited any of the nations or residential school sites located in Alberta to discuss the uncovering of children and bringing them home.

Given the political environment and news surrounding the discoveries of thousands of children's bodies at residential school sites across Canada, a statement with no evidence will only do one thing - a dog whistle to Kenney's most hateful supporters and staffers.

To Protect, Promote, Bring to Life, Implement and Sustain the True Spirit and Intent of Treaty No. 8

"As long as the sun shines, as grass grows, the rivers flow and until such time as which should never!"

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The premier's promotion of hate crimes towards First Nations should have him face his own judicial system.

We cannot ignore the division he is trying to create with this statement and place blame on Indigenous Peoples. Kenney must recant his statement and apologize for perpetuating harm on Indigenous Peoples, and more specifically residential school survivors.

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Media Contact:

Arthur Noskey

Grand Chief

Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta

Chiefs of the Sovereign Nations of Treaty 8

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"As long as the sun shines, the grass grows, the rivers flow and wind such stone as flesh should never!"