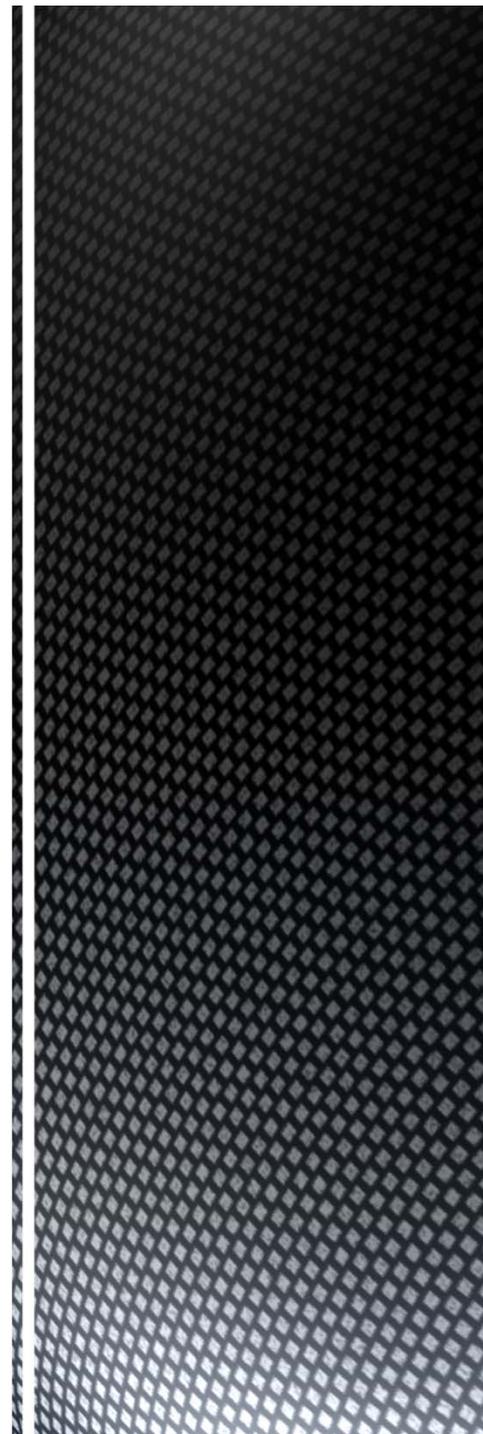


Calls to Action

Addressed to the
Churches who
administered Residential
Schools



The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

48. We call upon the church parties to the Settlement Agreement, and all other faith groups and interfaith social justice groups in Canada who have not already done so, to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms, and standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation. This would include, but not be limited to, the following commitments:



- i. Ensuring that their institutions, policies, programs, and practices comply with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- ii. Respecting Indigenous peoples' right to self determination in spiritual matters, including the right to practise, develop, and teach their own spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies, consistent with Article 12:1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



- iii. Engaging in ongoing public dialogue and actions to support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- iv. Issuing a statement no later than March 31, 2016, from all religious denominations and faith groups, as to how they will implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.



Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*

49. We call upon all religious denominations and faith groups who have not already done so to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*.



46. We call upon the parties to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement to develop and sign a Covenant of Reconciliation that would identify principles for working collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canadian society, and that would include, but not be limited to:



- i. Reaffirmation of the parties' commitment to reconciliation.
- ii. Repudiation of concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and the reformation of laws, governance structures, and policies within their respective institutions that continue to rely on such concepts.



- iii. Full adoption and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.
- iv. Support for the renewal or establishment of Treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for maintaining those relationships into the future.
- v. Enabling those excluded from the Settlement Agreement to sign onto the Covenant of Reconciliation.
- vi. Enabling additional parties to sign onto the Covenant of Reconciliation.



Church Apologies and Reconciliation

58. We call upon the Pope to issue an apology to Survivors, their families, and communities for the Roman Catholic Church's role in the spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children in Catholic-run residential schools. We call for that apology to be similar to the 2010 apology issued to Irish victims of abuse and to occur within one year of the issuing of this Report and to be delivered by the Pope in Canada.

Education and the history and legacy of residential schools

59. We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary.



Indigenous spirituality and education

60. We call upon leaders of the church parties to the Settlement Agreement and all other faiths, in collaboration with Indigenous spiritual leaders, Survivors, schools of theology, seminaries, and other religious training centres, to develop and teach curriculum for all student clergy, and all clergy and staff who work in Aboriginal communities, on the need to respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right, the history and legacy of residential schools and the roles of the church parties in that system, the history and legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities, and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence.

Funding

61. We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement, in collaboration with Survivors and representatives of Aboriginal organizations, to establish permanent funding to Aboriginal people for:



- i. Community-controlled healing and reconciliation projects.
- ii. Community-controlled culture and language revitalization projects.
- iii. Community-controlled education and relationship building projects.
- iv. Regional dialogues for Indigenous spiritual leaders and youth to discuss Indigenous spirituality, self-determination, and reconciliation.



Cemeteries

73. We call upon the federal government to work with churches, Aboriginal communities, and former residential school students to establish and maintain an online registry of residential school cemeteries, including, where possible, plot maps showing the location of deceased residential school children.

74. We call upon the federal government to work with the churches and Aboriginal community leaders to inform the families of children who died at residential schools of the child's burial location, and to respond to families' wishes for appropriate commemoration ceremonies and markers, and reburial in home communities where requested.



75. We call upon the federal government to work with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, churches, Aboriginal communities, former residential school students, and current landowners to develop and implement strategies and procedures for the ongoing identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries or other sites at which residential school children were buried. This is to include the provision of appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased children.



76. We call upon the parties engaged in the work of documenting, maintaining, commemorating, and protecting residential school cemeteries to adopt strategies in accordance with the following principles:

- i. The Aboriginal community most affected shall lead the development of such strategies.
- ii. Information shall be sought from residential school Survivors and other Knowledge Keepers in the development of such strategies.
- iii. Aboriginal protocols shall be respected before any potentially invasive technical inspection and investigation of a cemetery site.

Monument to Honour Survivors

82. We call upon provincial and territorial governments, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools Monument in each capital city to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.



Catholic Response on UN Declaration: The central themes of the Declaration, in fact, resonate strongly with statements already made by the Catholic Church, whether through the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) or the Holy See. These include the rights of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination, self-government, and to their own distinct institutions, the right to their traditional territories, the right to a fair process to adjudicate land claims, the right to their cultural traditions and customs, the right to practise and manifest their spiritual traditions and customs, the right to maintain their languages, the right to their own educational institutions, the right to improvement of their economic and social conditions, the right to guide their own development, and the right to the recognition and enforcement of treaties.



Excerpt from Catholic text on Doctrine of Discovery: We firmly assert that there is no basis in the Church's Scriptures, tradition, or theology, for the European seizure of land already inhabited by Indigenous Peoples; We reject the assertion that the principle of the first taker or discoverer, often described today by the terms Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, could be applied to lands already inhabited by Indigenous Peoples; We reject the assertion that the mere absence of European agricultural practices, technologies, or other aspects common to European culture, could justify the claiming of land as if it had no owner; We reject the assertion that Europeans could determine whether land was used or occupied by Indigenous people without consulting those people.



8 Commitments: 1. Continue to work with Catholic educational institutions and programs of formation in learning to tell the history of Canada in a way that is truthful, ensuring proper treatment of the history and experience of Indigenous Peoples, including the experience of oppression and marginalization which resulted from the Indian Act, the Residential School system, and frequent ignoring or undermining of signed treaties.



2. Work with centres of pastoral and clergy formation to promote a culture of encounter by including the study of the history of Canadian missions, with both their weaknesses and strengths, which encompasses the history of the Indian Residential Schools. In doing this, it will be important to be attentive to Indigenous versions of Canadian history, and for these centres to welcome and engage Indigenous teachers in the education of clergy and pastoral workers, assuring that each student has the opportunity to encounter Indigenous cultures as part of their formation.

3. Call upon theological centres to promote and continue to support Indigenous reflection within the Catholic community, and include this as part of the national ecumenical and interreligious dialogues in which the CCCB is involved.

4. Encourage partnerships between Indigenous groups and existing health care facilities to provide holistic health care, especially in areas where there are significant health needs.



5. ...establish and strengthen a restorative justice model within the criminal justice system.
6. Support the current national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls
7. ...deepening and broadening their relationships, dialogue and collaboration with Indigenous Peoples.... continue to move forward with renewed hope following the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report and its Calls to Action....
8. ...invite a greater acquaintance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples..., thus fostering continuing reflection in local contexts on how various aspects of the Declaration can be implemented or supported.

