



## Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 30, 2021

### **Tsilhqot'in Nation Commemorates National Truth and Reconciliation Day, Orange Shirt Day**

**Williams Lake, B.C:** The Tsilhqot'in Nation is commemorating National Truth and Reconciliation Day, also known as Orange Shirt Day.

In June 2021, Canada's parliament unanimously passed legislation that recognized September 30<sup>th</sup> as a National statutory holiday called National Truth and Reconciliation Day. The purpose of this day is to reflect on the harmful history and legacy of residential schools, recognize residential school Survivors and mourn those Indigenous children who did not come home.

The legislation was passed after ground-penetrating radar located 215 unmarked Indigenous children's graves at a former Kamloops residential school site in May 2021. Since the initial discovery, Indigenous children's remains have been found at former residential school sites across the country, and site investigation is ongoing at many residential school sites.

### **Quotes:**

#### **Nits'il?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, TNG Tribal Chair**

"Marking September 30<sup>th</sup> as National Truth and Reconciliation Day, is an important step on the path towards reconciliation, and indicates that Canada is moving in the right direction. After the discovery of the unmarked Indigenous children's graves across the country, we have come face-to-face with the injustice and genocide that was inflicted on our people. Now more than ever, we need concrete action for Indigenous peoples to heal and move forward. It is critical that the government implement the 94 calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The truth about residential schools needs to also be taught to children and introduced in the education system. For too long, the genocide of our people has been swept under the rug, and it is about time that Canada confronts its destructive legacy and history of residential schools."

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# T̓SILHQOT'IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

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**Nts̓il'iq̓in (Chief) Otis Guichon, TNG Tribal Vice-Chair**

“It is with a heavy heart that we commemorate this day. I am a residential school Survivor and I recall the injustices and experience of Canada’s residential schools. As the country and our people grieve the discovery of the unmarked children’s graves, I want to share a message of hope. I want to remind our people that we are resilient and that we have the tools to heal. It will be a long healing journey, but together we will get through this painful moment as a Nation and as a country. We have seen the outpour of support from the local, national and international communities to reconcile this past wrong. Today, marks an important moment in our history, where our Nation and Canada for the first time take pause together to acknowledge the truth.”

**Learn more:**

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Reports

<https://nctr.ca/records/reports/#trc-reports>

Orange Shirt Day

<https://www.orangeshirtday.org/>

T̓silhqot'in National Government

<https://www.tsilhqotin.ca/>

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