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SCO APPLAUDS CITY OF WINNIPEG FOR FLYING THE DAKOTA FLAG

Inclusion Equates to Education – Grand Chief Daniels

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ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB — The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) is praising the City of Winnipeg's decision to include the Dakota Flag as part of its' initiative to fly Indigenous Nation flags at City Hall. The City of Winnipeg will soon permanently fly three Indigenous flags, including those of Treaty One First Nations, Dakota Nations, and the Métis Nation.

"I want to express my sincere thanks to the Mayor and Council of Winnipeg for this acknowledgement of the Dakota Nations," said SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels. "Too often, the Dakota people are not recognized when it comes to land acknowledgements. With this gesture, the leadership at City Hall are showing they are open to learning and serious about moving towards reconciliation."

The Dakota Nations, located in what is now known as Manitoba, have never surrendered their Traditional lands, nor have they signed treaties with any colonial government. SCO represents four Dakota Nations including Birdtail Sioux First Nation, Dakota Tipi First Nation, Canupawakpa First Nation, and Dakota Plains First Nation.

In April of 2020, SCO asked City Councilor Shawn Nason to install new permanent flags honouring the Dakota First Nations, thus celebrating their sovereignty and independence.

"This is a good first step for Dakota peoples today," said Dakota Tipi Chief Eric Pashe. The history of the Dakota people is something that isn't properly recognized or known, but the Traditional territory of the Dakota people was always here across large sections of what is now southern Manitoba."

The Dakota peoples have a rich history, inhabiting several areas north and south of borders that were created to divide the nation states of Canada and the United States. They fought alongside British forces during the War of 1812, long before Canada came into confederation. The Dakota have a beautiful language, a rich heritage, and a culture that is animated with colour and life.

"On behalf of Dakota Plains First Nation, we appreciate this opportunity," said Dakota Plains First Nation Chief Orville Smoke. "We were always here, and we were never immigrants. There was a time when we weren't taken very seriously, and that hurt, because it is non-recognition. We were re-located

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from Portage la Prairie under the assumption that we were ‘Treaty Indians,’ to our current location where we have faced a lack of economic opportunity due to being in an isolated and remote area.”

Despite their many contributions, Dakota Nations were not made signatory to any treaties with Canada nor have they received the same recognition as other First Nations.

“I know this small step will not make up for the decades of ignorance and exclusion,” concluded Grand Chief Daniels. “However, it is a start. So in the spirit of the Dakota people I represent, I say Pidamiye and miigwetch, Winnipeg, for your recognition and support of Dakota peoples.”

SCO is also pleased to announce the Dakota Nations Flag logo was designed by Kyle Pashe, of Dakota Tipi First Nation, on behalf of the five Dakota Nations, including each community logo which was approved by all Nations.

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The Southern Chiefs’ Organization represents 34 First Nations and more than 80,000 citizens in what is now called southern Manitoba. SCO is an independent political organization that protects, preserves, promotes, and enhances First Nations peoples’ inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.

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