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SCO STATEMENT ON RCMP INVESTIGATION INTO ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE AT FORT ALEXANDER RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

Full support for a thorough and expeditious investigation – Grand Chief Daniels

July 27, 2021

ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB — The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) wholly supports the RCMP's large-scale investigation into the many allegations of sexual abuse at the former Fort Alexander Residential School, located in Sagkeeng First Nation.

"First, I want to offer my most heartfelt prayers for all those who suffered abuse at the Fort Alexander Residential School. SCO is in full support of the RCMP's investigation into the abuse suffered by many of our Relatives when they were forced to attend the Fort Alexander Residential School," said SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels. "We expect it to be a thorough investigation, and at the end, for those guilty of horrendous crimes against children to be brought to justice using the full extent of the law. We've waited more than long enough for these criminals be held fully accountable."

The Manitoba RCMP's Major Crime Services began the investigation in February 2010 following decades of allegations made publicly and privately of sexual abuse occurring at the former residential school. Dr. Phil Fontaine, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, was the first to bravely speak out publically several decades ago about the abuse he suffered during the time he was forced to attend the former residential school.

RCMP Officers have spoken to or interacted with more than 700 people across Turtle Island and have obtained 75 witness and victim statements so far, and their work continues. The Commanding Officer at the RCMP and the investigative staff reached out to SCO as well as other First Nation leaders and organizations earlier this month to give a full debrief on the investigation.

At this time, SCO asks for everyone to respect the privacy rights of all those involved in the ongoing investigation.

"Privacy is essential for the ongoing investigation and also for those who suffered abuse," concluded Grand Chief Daniels. "The last thing that anyone needs is to be further traumatized during such an important investigation. We fully support Chief Henderson's call for the respect of the citizens of Sagkeeng and their need for privacy at this time."

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SCO would like to remind everyone that an Indian Residential Schools Help Line 1-866-925-4419 is available 24 hours a day for anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of their residential school experience.

More information on supports for Survivors can be found on [our website](#).

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The Southern Chiefs' Organization represents 34 Anishinaabe and Dakota 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.

For Media Inquiries:

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