

Head Office

Swan Lake First Nation 200-200 Alpine Way, Headingley, Manitoba R4H 0B7

Winnipeg Sub-Office

1572 Dublin Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3E 0L4

Phone: 204.946.1869 Fax: 204.946.1871 Toll Free: 1.866.876.9701

www.scoinc.mb.ca Facebook: @SCOIncMB



INTERIM PREMIER DISAPPOINTS IN FIRST MEETING WITH SCO

The more things change, the more they stay the same – Grand Chief Daniels

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 13, 2021

ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB — The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) is expressing disappointment after meeting with interim Manitoba premier, Kelvin Goertzen late last week. On Friday, Goertzen held a joint meeting with the Grand Chief of SCO, along with the Grand Chiefs of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), and Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO).

"I began by asking premier Goertzen what he was going to do to immediately address the eleven year gap faced by First Nation people when it comes to life expectancy," said SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels. "Sadly, but not surprisingly, that query was met with silence. I am afraid until a new premier and administration are in place, we are looking at the tragic legacy of Brian Pallister's status quo."

The province must work to repair its partnership with First Nations people when it comes to respecting treaty rights and self-determination, including legal requirements for consultation with First Nations in areas of harvesting and hunting, land rights, along with understanding and respecting autonomy when it comes to gaming, tobacco and cannabis retailing.

"These are issues that we have been trying to get through to the current provincial government since they took office," added Grand Chief Daniels. "For them to continue to ignore us, will only serve to further exacerbate our seriously fractured relationship."

Grand Chief Daniels made it clear that going forward, every service offered by the provincial government must have a First Nation specific component to provide culturally safe access that is barrier free.

SCO is also calling on the province for sustainable funding for Child and Family Services (CFS) Authorities to manage single envelope funding and that the province ends the claw back of Children's Special Allowance payments coming from the federal government for children in care.

We are also seeking a commitment to stop undermining First Nations' fundamental rights, including the right to peacefully protest in order to protect our lands, our water, and our people.

Head Office

Swan Lake First Nation 200-200 Alpine Way, Headingley, Manitoba R4H 0B7

Winnipeg Sub-Office

1572 Dublin Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3E 0L4

Phone: 204.946.1869 Fax: 204.946.1871 Toll Free: 1.866.876.9701

www.scoinc.mb.ca Facebook: @SCOIncMB



‘Investing in First Nation people and businesses along with helping to end centuries of economic apartheid while contributing to economic growth among the youngest growing demographic in the province, is good for everyone,’ stated Grand Chief Daniels. “When the First Peoples of this land we now share succeed, we all succeed. Isn’t that what reconciliation is truly all about?”

Additionally, SCO is asking the current premier and cabinet to address immediate infrastructure concerns including critical repairs to the provincial road through Berens River First Nation. The road’s depleted condition is having a negative effect on the community’s school and water supply. There is also a dire need to establish reliable internet service for Bloodvein First Nation. SCO is also hoping the province will finally commit to actually engaging in meaningful dialogue with its member Nations that will be impacted by the Lake Manitoba flood outlet project.

“The interim premier and everyone in his caucus need to understand, that repairing our fractured relationship goes way beyond public land acknowledgements or trotting out the Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation in a beaded vest for public appearances,” concluded Grand Chief Daniels. “Until they actually commit to thorough and proper consultation with us, then they will just continue down a dark path of disrespect and disregard for us as Treaty partners. I can only hope the next premier of this province will take a much different road.”

-30-

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.

For Media Inquiries:

Al Foster, Senior Correspondent, Southern Chiefs’ Organization

Mobile: (204) 806-6837 | Email: Media@scoinc.mb.ca