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UTFA Statement on National Indigenous Peoples Day

June 21, 2021

June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day on Turtle Island, a day of celebration, recognition, and respect for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis cultures.

This year's National Indigenous Peoples Day is especially poignant in light of the recent discoveries of the remains of children at former residential schools across Canada.

UTFA recognizes the particular role and responsibility that we in the post-secondary sector have to reflect and learn Indigenous histories, cultures, and rights, as well as our own roles in the historic process of colonization.

We encourage UTFA members to review the final summary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, including this passage:

"For over a century, the central goals of Canada's Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada."

UTFA hears the voices of Indigenous peoples. The legacy of colonialism and racism toward Indigenous peoples in Canada is painful and ongoing. We also acknowledge the current systemic barriers that disproportionately impact Indigenous communities, including those exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis.

UTFA stands with Indigenous members of the University of Toronto community. We are committed to dismantling anti-Indigenous racism at the University of Toronto and beyond.

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