

May 2015

TO ALL CUPE CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

JUNE 21 – NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY “STANDING TOGETHER”

CUPE is celebrating June 21, National Aboriginal Day, in recognition of the cultures and contributions of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. This day is an opportunity to become better acquainted with the art, agriculture, games, medicines, and other unique aspects of Indigenous cultures. It's also a day to remember the significant human rights struggles that Indigenous Peoples have faced and continue to face today. This struggle is shaped by the ongoing legacy of colonialism, including the impact of the residential school system, the 60s scoop, the persistent violation of treaty rights, and the environmental devastation of indigenous lands and waters. The growing list of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls, and the lack of justice for their families, is a major human rights crisis for Canada today.

On June 2, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada will release its findings on the Indian Residential School System and the ongoing impact of the system on Indigenous Peoples in Canada. CUPE recognizes the crucial work of the Commission in uncovering the truth about what happened to Indigenous children, and in developing recommendations to right past wrongs. On June 21, we must take the opportunity to celebrate the resilience of Aboriginal cultures after enduring such a system of abuse and cultural extermination.

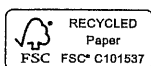
Despite this legacy of injustice and harm, many recent reports and studies have concluded that the Harper government is creating a wider equality gap. Indigenous Peoples continue to struggle with a lack of access to clean drinking water, education and health care, and Harper's cuts to support programs and indigenous organizations make these problems worse.

CUPE opposes these cuts, and stands in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples and their communities. We believe in equality through strong public services, and speak out against the trampling of human rights. We stand together with indigenous organizations such as the Defenders of the Land, the Assembly of First Nations, the Métis National Council, Idle No More,

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PAUL MOIST – National President / Président national **CHARLES FLEURY** – National Secretary-Treasurer / Secrétaire-trésorier national

FRED HAHN – DANIEL LÉGÈRE – LUCIE LEVASSEUR – KELLY MOIST – MARLE ROBERTS – General Vice-Presidents / Vice-présidences générales




Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Native Women's Association of Canada, the National Association of Friendship Centres, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and many more. These organizations are working toward a world in which Indigenous Peoples are empowered and live in dignity. We encourage CUPE members to get to know these organizations. Consider how your local can support their work, and celebrate National Aboriginal Day this June 21.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul Moist". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a stylized "M".

PAUL MOIST
National President

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Charles Fleury". The signature is cursive and somewhat abstract, with a large initial "C" and a stylized "F".

CHARLES FLEURY
National Secretary-Treasurer