



Regroupement des centres
d'amitié autochtones du Québec

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

National Aboriginal Day at the Native Friendship Centres: Peace and friendship to the survivors of the Indian residential schools

Quebec City, June 20, 2008 – To mark National Aboriginal Day, the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) offers its wishes of peace and friendship to the survivors of the Indian residential schools.

The Native Friendship Centres in Quebec are working daily to create better understanding of the issues, challenges and problems facing Aboriginal people in the urban setting. Their mission is to improve the quality of life of urban Aboriginal people, promote culture, and build bridges between peoples.

In keeping with that mission, the Native Friendship Centres will be celebrating National Aboriginal Day, each in its own way. But this year takes on a special meaning, following the official apology by Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper for the harm done to the survivors of the residential schools.

To express our empathy for and recognition of the survivors, the Native Friendship Centres in Quebec are holding various cultural activities today and tomorrow. These activities will not erase the damage done in past years but they will help to strengthen the feeling of belonging to our Aboriginal culture and standing shoulder to shoulder with one another.

The RCAAQ and the Native Friendship Centres in Quebec have been advocating the values of respect and solidarity for close to 40 years. With these values firmly in mind, they are using this special day to honour the determination, strength and resilience of the survivors of the Indian residential schools. *"It is important for the Movement to recognize and highlight the capacity for resilience that the survivors have shown,"* noted RCAAQ President Édith Cloutier.

The mission of the **Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec** is to defend the rights and interests of Aboriginal people in the urban setting by supporting the Native Friendship Centres in Quebec in their efforts to improve the quality of life of Aboriginal people, promote culture and foster understanding between peoples.

The Quebec Native Friendship Centres are located in the cities of Montreal, Val-d'Or, Sept-Îles, Chibougamau, La Tuque, Senneterre, Quebec City and Joliette.

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