

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

FOUNDING HEAD OFFICE
209 - 345 Chief Alex Thomas Way
Kamloops, B.C. V2H 1H1
Tel: 250-828-9746
Fax: 250-828-0319



VANCOUVER OFFICE
401 - 312 Main Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6A 2T2
Tel: 604-684-0231
Fax: 604-684-5726
1-800-793-9701
Email: ubcic@ubcic.bc.ca
Web: www.ubcic.bc.ca

Statement

August 2, 2022

UBCIC Statement on Pope's Apology for Residential Schools

(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C. – August 2, 2022) The Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) monitored Pope Francis's long-awaited visit to Turtle Island last week to apologize for the Catholic Church's role in Residential Schools. On a departing flight, the Pope spoke to a reporter and finally agreed that the abuses Indigenous peoples endured amounted to genocide; he failed to renounce the Doctrine of Discovery.

UBCIC stands with Residential School survivors and veterans and their families and communities during this deeply emotional and traumatizing time. The Pope's apology came after years of unwavering requests by Indigenous peoples including the UBCIC Chiefs Council, and is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #58.

UBCIC acknowledges the significance of the Pope issuing a formal apology here on Turtle Island, but respectfully calls for a more fulsome apology to be made by the Pope that acknowledges the breadth of systemic abuses perpetuated by the Catholic Church including sexual abuse, and that includes tangible and full reparations. The UBCIC Chiefs Council continues to call on the Pope to renounce the doctrines of moral superiority that justified the church imposing its spirituality and beliefs through a harsh environment. The Doctrine of Discovery is a deadly weapon of colonization that was advanced by the Catholic Church and European monarchies to legitimize their ruthless and violent theft of stolen lands that have been occupied by Indigenous peoples since time immemorial and Canadian law continues to rely heavily on the Doctrine, which is now called "assumed Crown sovereignty." The genocide that the Pope has now acknowledged took place was justified by the Doctrine of Discovery, and the Doctrine must be renounced as soon as possible.

UBCIC also calls on the Catholic Church to continue to raise the funds promised to residential school survivors. The \$25 million promise was made as part of the Indian Residential School Survivor Agreement, but the Church stopped raising money at \$4 million, then successfully argued

in a Saskatchewan court that they had given their best efforts towards the fundraising but had no more to give. The Catholic Church is [purportedly](#) worth \$4.8 billion and has spent almost [\\$300 million](#) on renovations to churches across Canada.

The Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line is available 24-hours a day for anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of their Residential school experience: 1-800-721-0066

-30-

Media inquiries:

Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer, c/o 778-866-0548

UBCIC is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

For more information please visit www.ubcic.bc.ca