



## A Statement on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation from Members for Change

***Content warning: The materials below contain references to violence against Indigenous people. Please take care when engaging with these materials.***

September 30 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, honouring the children who never came home and those who survived residential schools, as well as their families and communities. The designation of this day is in response to one of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's [94 Calls to Action](#) (specifically, Recommendation 80) and is meant to ensure that the ongoing commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools will remain a vital part of the reconciliation process.

This year, the national statutory holiday falls on Monday, October 2 - and Members for Change believes that CAPE members and other federal public servants should respect the spirit of the day by putting reconciliation into practice. CAPE and its membership should advocate for the changes that Indigenous public servants as well as their communities across the country have been demanding for years. The events surrounding this solemn day are an opportunity to strengthen relationships and deepen year-round reconciliation efforts in tangible ways.

On significant days for Indigenous peoples across Canada, like the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, we can do far more than simply putting out statements or having union representatives meet with the employer's Indigenous Federal Employees Network. While these actions are important, Members for Change believes they are merely a starting point. CAPE and its membership have a greater responsibility to advance reconciliation and decolonization efforts across Canada.

Specifically, Members for Change notes outstanding action items from earlier federal public sector reconciliation efforts, such as the [Canada Beyond 150 Reconciliation Report](#) and the [Many Voices One Mind Report](#), that CAPE should be actively engaging, advocating for, and organizing around, including:

- Work toward dropping Official Language requirements for Indigenous federal public servants, while building up Indigenous language promotion and use throughout the federal public service
- Take active and concrete steps to help break through hiring barriers for Indigenous federal public servants into executive positions, such as proactively advocating for data collection on these barriers
- Develop curriculum for all public servants on Indigenous Knowledge and challenges facing Indigenous communities, with dedicated, ongoing staffing and resource commitments to ensure real and measurable impact
- Expand regional hiring and telework rights for all public servants, which would allow many Indigenous people to remain closer to their territories and communities while working in the public service



With these actions in mind, if elected, Members for Change will:

1. Create a CAPE Indigenous Circle with National Executive Committee standing, as a framework for other equity caucuses to advance concrete goals (including in bargaining)
2. Add CAPE's efforts to those of other unions like PSAC to help actively advance the goals of Indigenous public servants and other common objectives, whether in bargaining (such as the fight for an Indigenous public servant language allowance) or otherwise (such as the [Joint Committee on Indigenous Languages](#))
3. Work with Indigenous members and all CAPE members to develop an organizing plan to realize the full implementation of the [Canada Beyond 150 Reconciliation Report](#) by 2025
4. Develop a comprehensive plan with targeted milestones to improve Indigenous hiring, retention, and promotion outcomes, including fighting for telework as a contractual right
5. Develop tools to ensure that CAPE locals and LROs are educated and equipped to reliably support Indigenous members facing racist or colonial workplace issues and microaggressions.
6. Host regular panels and workshops on issues important to Indigenous communities in Canada and Indigenous public servants, while developing and promoting accessible resources for all CAPE members
7. Ensure CAPE takes a leading role in promoting awareness and developing tangible action plans on outstanding issues facing Indigenous members and their communities in Canada, with the goal of moving beyond occasional engagement with employer networks to build long-term, living relationships

Some key campaigns where CAPE should take a leadership role include:

- **Clean Water for All** - pushing all levels of government to finally address the drinking water crisis affecting many Indigenous communities, while upholding watershed protection efforts often led by indigenous people
- **Free Prior and Informed Consent** - calling on all levels of government to uphold the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- **Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls** - pushing the Government of Canada to implement all recommendations made in the [2019 National Inquiry](#), while directly supporting local efforts such as the call to [Search the Prairie Green and Brady Road Landfills](#)

On the occasion of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, we urge all CAPE members to seriously consider how their union can be a part of advancing reconciliation and decolonization.

In solidarity,

Members for Change - [Membersforchange.ca](http://Membersforchange.ca)