



SOVEREIGN NATIONS OF TREATY NO. 8 CHIEFS (AB) DECLARE FIRST NATION POLICING AS AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE AND We Call upon the Canada to implement this Declaration.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 6, 2023 (Unceded Territory of Treaty No. 8) The Sovereign Nations of Treaty No. 8 Chiefs met in Assembly on March 27, 2023, and unanimously declared that Policing is an essential service.

The Sovereign Nations are working towards the establishment of their own Treaty 8 Police force and have been exploring First Nation policing models nationally and engaging with their citizens. Within Treaty No. 8 there is an existing police force called the Lakeshore Regional Police Service which currently serves five of the First Nations within the Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council. This is an excellent working police force; however, the First Nations in Treaty No. 8 Territory need a full police service.

Many First Nation police services are chronically underfunded and are not deemed an essential service federally and are subject to their government policies. Treaty No. 8 assured the Sovereign Nations *“that Treaty would not lead to any forced interference with their mode of life”*. Based on the True Spirit and Intent of Treaty No. 8, we were assured promises to policing and legal representation. It has been 124 years since entering Treaty No. 8 and these promises have not been implemented.

North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) was a Canadian police force established in 1873 to maintain order and in fear of Rebellion. King Edward VII awarded the title “Royal” to the North-West Mounted Police (RNWMP) in 1904. The government amalgamated the RNWMP and Dominion Police, to form the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in 1920, without consultation with the First Nations. Our Elders understood that *“the Red Coats” were to ensure the protection for the First Nations and their members from the Queen’s subjects, the settlers.*

However, the federal, provincial, and municipal police services have not been an effective mechanism for our First Nations and peoples. We are subjugated and subdued to a system based on racism and discrimination and our women and men are missing and being murdered without proper investigations. Under the reign of the first Prime Minister, it was clear that the role of NWMP was to displace the First Nations peoples onto reserves, kidnap our children to put into Indian Residential Schools and the bases of this mentality still lingers today.

If this was not enough, municipalities have recently announced the establishment of their own self-administered police forces, being funding by government. Canada is also working with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) on First Nations policing legislation. We have on many occasions made it known to all levels of government and to the AFN that AFN does not represent nor speak on behalf of the Sovereign Nations of Treaty No. 8 and their citizens. Both have been served “cease and desist” letters.

It is time for Canada and its government officials to meet with the Sovereign Nations of Treaty No. 8

MEDIA CONTACT:

Grand Chief Arthur Noskey
Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta
Telephone: 780-444-9366 EMail: Reception@treaty8.org