



**For Immediate Release**

## ***Grand Chief Randy Ermineskin's Response to the Release of the Alberta Auditor General's Report on Child Welfare***

**July 19, 2016, Maskwacis, AB:** "We appreciate and commend the Auditor General's Report dated July 19, 2016. The contents of the report are not 'new' to First Nations and we appreciate that it is legitimized by the Alberta's Auditor General.

The Audit has recognized the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls for Actions and Jordan's Principle. We expect these initiatives to be implemented in policies to address the historical trauma and social determinants stemming from colonialism, the residential school era and current western ideologies.

Yes, there is a dire need for legislative and policy change within the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act. In partnership, First Nations expect full engagement in making fundamental changes to assist in reducing the over-representation of First Nations children in the Child Intervention System.

Jurisdictional boundaries continue to create challenges and barriers that prevent access to services for First Nations children and in addressing the best interests of the child. The Audit includes 'prevention' and 'early intervention' as key factors in reducing the number of children in care, to which First Nations require involvement. Just as important, social determinants and poverty must be addressed by all levels of government.

There is severe inequality of resources, capacity, and discretionary definition of the best interest of the child, compared to non-Indigenous children. Notwithstanding the safety issue, our First Nation child has a right to know their identity, where they belong, and where they come from. Our First Nation children need to come home.

Going forward, we anticipate further dialogue with Governments to ensure that we can address the issues collectively as outlined in the Auditor General's Report on Children in Care.

At this time, we would like to thank the Minister of Indigenous Relations Richard Feehan, for coming out to our community to release the Auditor General's Report. We certainly welcome further dialogue with Minister Sabir regarding the report and to continue to work together in addressing the needs of our First Nations children and families."

Media Contact: Acting Chief Executive Officer, Beatrice Carpentier (780) 944-0334  
[bcarpentier@treatysix.org](mailto:bcarpentier@treatysix.org)