



### **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation 2023**

The Ukrainian Canadian Students Union (SUSK) acknowledges that we are situated and operating on ancestral lands of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people throughout Canada. Wherever we are across the country, we are on traditional Indigenous territory. We honour the First Nations, Metis, and Inuit communities who made and continue to call the territories of Turtle Island home, long before our Ukrainian ancestors arrived. Throughout time, this land has been and continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples and groups whom we recognize as stewards of the land as well as vital contributors to our society.

We also recognize many members within the Ukrainian Canadian community who are Indigenous and those of mixed Indigenous Ukrainian ancestry, who have and continue to make our families and communities more vibrant; we honour and respect them. It is a continuous path to ensure our community is a safe and supportive space for their life journeys and truths.

On this National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, SUSK honours the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit missing children, survivors, and descendants of survivors of the residential school system. We recognize the ever-present legacy of residential schools, specifically on the welfare and well-being of Indigenous peoples. SUSK holds the Canadian government responsible for implementing The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action of which they are directly or jointly accountable for 76. According to the Yellowhead Institute, only 13 out of the 94 Calls to Action have been completed in total since 2015, with over 7 years since the publishing of the report, there is work to be done by individuals, communities, institutions, and governments to honour the experiences of Indigenous Peoples.

SUSK dedicates itself to living history in the settler state of Canada, to honour residential school survivors, their families, and their communities on September 30th and every day of the year. We also recognize residential schools as part of a system of cultural genocide that has left a lasting impact that deeply affects people today. We commit to collaborating with members and organizations in the Indigenous community across the country to understand what further actions Ukrainian Canadian students can take towards building and strengthening understanding and reconciliation between Ukrainian settlers and Indigenous relations. We strive to continuously educate ourselves and explore the expansive and heterogeneous voices, stories, and diverse cultures of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. We recognize that the road towards justice, freedom, and sovereignty continues and we commit to being a part of the struggle.

Today, we encourage everyone to wear orange and affirm that every child matters. Today and every day, we encourage all Ukrainian Canadians to educate themselves, reflect, and stand in solidarity with their local Indigenous communities.

SUSK Advocacy Committee