



Office of the Independent
Special Interlocutor
Ensemble des Nations du Canada
et des Premières Nations
et des Métis

News Release

For immediate release

Independent Special Interlocutor to continue to work with Indigenous communities on protecting unmarked graves and burial sites at former Indian Residential Schools until the Fall of 2024

May 31, 2024 – Six Nations of the Grand River, Ontario – Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor (OSI)

A [National Residential School Crisis Line](#) is available to provide support for former Residential School students. Emotional and crisis referral services are available by calling the 24-hour national crisis line: 1-866-925-4419.

The [Hope for Wellness Line](#) is available to all Indigenous peoples and provides immediate, toll-free telephone and on-line support and crisis intervention 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is available in English, French and, upon request, Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut. Trained counsellors are available by phone at 1-855-242-3310 or by online chat on their website.

Today, Kimberly Murray, Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools, confirmed that her Mandate will continue into the Fall of 2024. This will enable her to continue the crucial work of assisting Survivors, Indigenous families, and communities that are searching for the missing children and to deliver a Final Report before the end of her Mandate. This Final Report will include comprehensive recommendations that fully capture what the Independent Special Interlocutor has heard as the best way forward to properly respect and protect the unmarked graves and burial sites.

“With more time to complete this important work, I will be able to properly assess what a new legal framework should be to protect the unmarked graves and burial sites, and to ensure that the Government of Canada better understands their obligations to First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples,” said Independent Special Interlocutor Murray.

Ms. Murray and the OSI have accomplished a great deal since her appointment in June 2022. She has prioritized meeting with Survivors, their families, and communities, and has delivered numerous presentations to Indigenous leadership, communities, and organizations. She has also delivered an [Interim Report](#) (“Sacred Responsibility: Searching for the Missing Children and Unmarked Burials”) to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and to First Nations, Inuit and Métis Survivors, families, communities and leadership, and hosted six National Gatherings on Unmarked Burials. Summary Reports for these Gatherings, as well as the Interim Report, are available on the [OSI’s website](#).

Ms. Murray and her team are working closely and collaboratively with First Nations, Inuit and Métis leaders, Survivors, families, communities, and experts to identify needed measures and to recommend a new federal framework to ensure the respectful and culturally appropriate treatment and protection of unmarked graves and burial sites of children at former Indian Residential Schools and associated sites. A



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final National Gathering will be held in the Fall of 2024. Details will be shared with Survivors, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis families and communities, and the public as soon as possible.

The Mandate of the Independent Special Interlocutor was created following the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada's engagement with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis leaders across the country, in which the importance of an Indigenous-led response was emphasized.

For further information, please visit www.osi-bis.ca.

- 30 -

About the OSI

On June 8, 2022, Kimberly R. Murray was appointed as Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

For more information about the Independent Special Interlocutor and her Mandate visit: <https://osi-bis.ca/>, <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/interlocutor-interlocuteur/mtr-mcr.html> and <https://orders-in-council.canada.ca/attachment.php?attach=45605&lang=en>.

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