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Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission is formally established and operational

OTTAWA, June 1 /CNW Telbec/ - Justice Harry S. LaForme, Chair of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and Commissioners Claudette Dumont-Smith and Jane Brewin Morley, Q.C. are pleased to announce that the TRC is officially established and will be fully operational on June 2, 2008.

"Today marks the beginning of our five-year mandate as an independent Commission," said Justice LaForme. "We can now begin formally planning and preparing for the work ahead to learn and understand the truth of the Indian Residential Schools legacy, as well as examine the process of reconciliation."

The TRC was created as a result of the court-approved Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement that was negotiated between legal counsel for former students, legal counsel for the Churches, the Government of Canada, the Assembly of First Nations and other Aboriginal organizations.

"Our first priority will be to meet with partners of the Settlement Agreement, former students and other interested parties so that we can best determine our course of action and move forward quickly with the work ahead," said Commissioner Claudette Dumont-Smith.

"One of the important challenges facing the Commission is engaging the broader community in the process," said Commissioner Jane Morley. "An enduring reconciliation must include young Canadians and Canadians from diverse backgrounds."

Anyone who has been affected by the Indian Residential Schools legacy will have the opportunity to share their experiences in a safe and culturally appropriate manner. Individual statements can be private or public. Details for TRC events will be confirmed in the near future.

For further information: Kimberly Phillips, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Secretariat, (613) 219-5872, www.trc-cvr.ca; Nancy Pine, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Secretariat, (613) 316-5654, www.trc-cvr.ca

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION - More on this organization

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