

discourse about the past through a reconciliation lens would open up new and exciting possibilities for a future in which Aboriginal peoples take their rightful place in Canada's history as founding nations who have strong and unique contributions to make to this country.

In the Commission's view, there is an urgent need in Canada to develop historically literate citizens who understand why and how the past is relevant to their own lives and the future of the country. Museums have an ethical responsibility to foster national reconciliation, and not simply tell one party's version of the past. This can be accomplished by representing the history of residential schools and of Aboriginal peoples in ways that invite multiple, sometimes conflicting, perspectives, yet ultimately facilitate empathy, mutual respect, and a desire for reconciliation that is rooted in justice.

The Canadian Museum of History and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, working collaboratively with Aboriginal peoples, regional and local museums, and the Canadian Museums Association, should take a leadership role in making reconciliation a central theme in the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Canada's Confederation in 2017.

It must be noted that although we have focused on national museums here, regional and local museums also have a critical role to play in creating opportunities for Canadians to examine the historical injustices suffered by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, engage in public dialogue about what has been done and what remains to be done to remedy this, and reflect on the spirit and intent of reconciliation. Through their exhibits, education outreach, and research programs, all museums are well positioned to contribute to education for reconciliation.

Calls to Action

- 67) We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Museums Association to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of museum policies and best practices to determine the level of compliance with the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and to make recommendations.
- 68) We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, and the Canadian Museums Association to mark the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation in 2017 by establishing a dedicated national funding program for commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation.