

special event called Witnessing the Future at Rideau Hall in Ottawa on October 15, 2009. In the following years, the current governor general of Canada, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston; two former prime ministers, the Right Honourable Joe Clark and the Right Honourable Paul Martin; two former national Aboriginal leaders, Chief Phil Fontaine of the Assembly of First Nations and former Ambassador Mary Simon, Past President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami; and a host of other distinguished individuals have all agreed to serve as Honorary Witnesses.

The Commission also invited Canadians to make expressions of reconciliation at its National and Regional Events. The Commission received more than 180 expressions from individuals, organizations, and the parties to the Settlement Agreement who wished to publicly state their commitment to the journey of healing and reconciliation and speak to the ways in which they are contributing to that journey. Documents and items related to each expression of reconciliation were placed in ceremony in the beautiful Bentwood Box created by Coast Salish carver Luke Marston. The box will become part of the permanent legacy of the TRC housed in the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

Education and outreach

The Commission worked throughout its mandate to educate the public about the legacy of residential schools and to invite and encourage public participation in its events and activities. The Commission took part in nearly 900 separate events. These included a number of special events that the TRC organized with various partners to engage with Survivors' organizations and other Aboriginal groups, youth, women, faith communities, the philanthropic community, and new Canadians. The Commission also accepted invitations to share information about its work internationally through the United Nations, the International Centre for Transitional Justice, and a number of university law faculties.¹⁰

In the final year of its mandate, the Commission organized two events to gather additional information for its report. It held a Traditional Knowledge Keepers Forum to learn how traditional Aboriginal knowledge can contribute to reconciliation. It also organized, with the support of Égale Canada Human Rights Trust, a forum with members of the Two Spirit community to discuss the impacts of residential schools and what needs to be done to support reconciliation and healing in that community.

Commemoration and community events funding

The Settlement Agreement allocated \$20 million for commemoration initiatives. These were defined as initiatives that would honour, educate, remember, memorialize, and pay tribute to former residential school students, their families, and their communities. The