



## **MEDIA ADVISORY (photo and broadcast opportunities)**

March 20, 2014

### **KAIROS brings Blanket Exercise to TRC**

Toronto, ON – On March 26, KAIROS Canada will engage attendees at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) event in Edmonton through the Blanket Exercise, an interactive activity to help people of all ages learn about Canada's history from the perspective of Indigenous people.

The TRC event on residential schools takes place from March 27 to 30 at Edmonton's Shaw Conference Centre. This national event marks the seventh and final annual gathering.

Approximately 15,000 people are expected to attend to learn from first-hand testimony how children were taken from their families and communities to attend 'Indian Residential Schools', funded by the federal government and run by churches. Generations continue to suffer from the numerous abuses that Indigenous children experienced during this national project of assimilation.

The Blanket Exercise will take place during the following:

<b>EVENT:</b>	<i>Reconciliation with the Land and its Peoples: how do issues affecting Indigenous peoples, migrant and faith communities intersect</i>
<b>LOCATION</b>	Action For Healthy Communities Society of Edmonton, #101 10554-110 Street, Edmonton
<b>DATE &amp; TIME:</b>	Wednesday, March 26: 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
<b>PHOTO/VIDEO : OPPORTUNITY</b>	Yes
<b>WHAT:</b>	A collaboration of Action for Healthy Communities, The Mapuche Nation Support Committee, and KAIROS, this event will include a panel discussion and the KAIROS Blanket Exercise.
<b>WHO:</b>	Alfredo Barahona, KAIROS Indigenous/Migrant and Networks Relations Coordinator Harley Eagle, Panelist and Co-Chair of KAIROS' Indigenous Rights Circle

#### **About the Blanket Exercise:**

Fifteen years ago, the Aboriginal Rights Coalition worked with Indigenous elders and teachers to develop an interactive way to learn the history most Canadians are never taught. The Blanket Exercise has since been offered thousands of times, presenting Canada's history from the perspective of Indigenous people.

The exercise uses blankets to represent the lands of what is now called Canada, and the distinct cultures and nations which live on those lands to this day. Participants represent the First Peoples. When they move onto the blankets, they are taken back in time to the arrival of the Europeans. The Narrator and a European (or two) work with the participants to read a script while the exercise goes through the history of treaty-making, colonization and resistance that resulted in the nation we today call Canada.

#### **ABOUT KAIROS: CANADIAN ECUMENICAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES**

KAIROS is a faith-based social justice organization of eleven Canadian churches and religious organizations. It focuses on Indigenous rights, international human rights and ecological justice. We deliberate on issues of common concern, advocate for social change and join with people of faith and goodwill in action for social transformation.

- 30 -

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