NunatuKavut
our ancient land

STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NUNATUKAVUT CALLS ON PROVINCE TO STOP CELEBRATION OF "DISCOVERY DAY"

HAPPY VALLEY-GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR, June 15, 2020 – Following a letter written to Premier Dwight Ball today, NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) President Todd Russell issued the statement below:

"NCC is calling on the provincial government to end the observance of Discovery Day in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is a day that perpetuates colonialist policies and a legacy that has detrimentally impacted NunatuKavut Inuit and our communities for generations. It undermines our people's longstanding connection to our lands, sea and ice and carries with it an inaccurate and misleading understanding of history.

The celebration of a day devoted to 'discovery' is also supported by the Doctrine of Discovery, which sought to rationalize the pillage and theft of Indigenous lands. This doctrine has been resoundingly rejected. The time has come to rid our society of these symbols of colonization and oppression.

There is a strong and ongoing movement against racism and a fight for equality happening in Canada and around the world. People are fighting for justice and are standing up for lasting change. Ending the observance of Discovery Day is an opportunity to contribute to reconciliation and correct the narrative about the history of Indigenous peoples in this part of the world.

NCC commits to working with Premier Ball and Indigenous leaders on naming a day that celebrates and appropriately reflects the facts of history and the tremendous contributions of all Indigenous peoples to this province. This act of positive change would open the space for other acts of reconciliation to take place. It is our hope that 2019 was the last Discovery Day in Newfoundland and Labrador."

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