



On behalf of United Religions Initiative (URI) North America we would like to first acknowledge that we are here today on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tseil-Waututh people and we give our sincere thanks.

United Religions Initiative (URI) is a global grassroots interfaith network found in 83 countries around the world. Through global and local initiatives, we work to build enduring interfaith cooperation and to end religiously motivated violence by bridging religious and cultural differences.

We stand here today in gratitude for your courage and determination. Truth telling is difficult. There are always those that don't want to hear it. The more painful the truth, the harder it is to tell.

You have begun to shift the fabric of a nation and opened the door for many Canadians to speak about genocide, persecution, tyranny, the loss of loved ones, and missing loved ones. You have also opened the door for many Canadians to speak about healing, truth telling, cleansing of old wounds and letting go of the pain, anger and blame.

It is a new dawn, and we are eager to walk this path with you, to offer our support and to learn from you. We are committed to putting forth effort to build a better future for our children.

As a global organization, one of the ways we are putting this commitment into action is through our global Talking Back To Hate campaign for people of all ages. Youth, adults and elders use education, advocacy and positive action to stand up to hate speech, bullying and discrimination.

These young "upstanders" with us here today will be presenting our expressions of reconciliation. Along with a framed copy of our statement, they will gift our Talking Back To Hate Toolkit. This toolkit provides guidelines, questions, and examples from our member organizations and other resources to help individuals and groups around the world. The Inspirational quotes included share teachings from many faith, spiritual and philosophical practices that explore the values of respect and understanding. The Talking Back to Hate tool cards offer suggestions for positive engagement and conversation starters for youth, individuals, organizations and community leaders. Our video of the Talking Back To Hate pledge, features some of our members on this very stage pledging to take action.

It is an honour for all of us to be here with you today on the International Day of Action for Talking Back To Hate. Thank you for inspiring us. Thank you for your courage, determination and wisdom. Thank you for opening doors for new dialogue so that we will have a different future for our children.

Presented Saturday, September 22, 2013 at the Truth and Reconciliation National Event in Vancouver, British Columbia by:

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