

**COMMISSIONER'S STATEMENT ON JUNE 20, 2005
REGARDING NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY (June 21)**

- As many of you are aware, in 1996, the former Governor General, Romeo LeBlanc declared June 21 as National Aboriginal Day.
- June 21 was selected because of the cultural significance of the summer solstice – the first day of summer and the longest day of the year.
- The intent, in 1996, of proclaiming National Aboriginal Day was to recognize the contribution of Aboriginal Peoples to Canadian society and to the fabric of Canada.
- Out of respect for the significance of this day to Aboriginal communities and for the fact that it is often reserved for ceremonies and celebration, the Inquiry will not sit tomorrow.
- We will resume hearings on Wednesday, June 22nd at 9:00 a.m. In the coming weeks, it may become necessary for us to sit later on some days, to make up for lost time.
- In the meantime, I wish all of our Aboriginal colleagues and communities a meaningful day tomorrow, with friends and family.
- Thank you.