



## **For immediate release**

### **Commemorating 100 Years of the end of Canada's First National Internment Operations, 1914 to 1920.**

(Winnipeg) – June 20, 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the end of Canada's first national internment operations of 1914 to 1920.

In total, 8,579 men, women and children branded as “enemy aliens” and interned. Among them were Ukrainians, Alevi Kurds, Armenians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Jews, Ottoman Turks, Polish, Romanians, Russians, Serbians, Slovaks and Slovenes, of which most were Ukrainians and most were civilians. Many were imprisoned. Stripped of what little wealth they had, they were forced to do heavy labour in Canada's hinterlands for the profit of their jailors. They were also disenfranchised and subjected to other state-sanctioned censures not because of anything they had done but only because of where they had come from, who they were.

“The history of Canada's First National Internment Operations reminds us of the hardship caused when civil and human rights are violated, and of the need to continually work in their defence,” stated Andrew Harasymiw, Chair of the Endowment Council of the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund (EC CFWWIRF).

In May 2008, representatives of the Canada's Ukrainian community reached an agreement with the Government of Canada providing for the creation of an endowment fund to support commemorative, educational, scholarly and cultural projects intended to remind all Canadians of this episode in our nation's history.

Since its inception in 2008, the EC CFWWIRF has approved over \$5 million in grants, in an effort to shed light on this tragic yet little-known chapter in Canadian history. The grant projects include historical exhibits, awareness campaigns and presentations, commemorative plaques and statues, internee cemeteries, films, historical research, artistic endeavors, symposiums and educational resources, among others.

The EC CFWWIRF encourages all the affected ethno-cultural communities to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of Canada's first national

internment operations within their communities on June 20, 2020. These cross-Canada events will honour those who were imprisoned, stripped of their wealth, forced to do heavy labour and disenfranchised.

“Although the internees are no longer with us, acts of recognition such as these commemoration events will honor their memory, their sacrifice and their devotion to Canada,” said Harasymiw. “We will remember all of the men, women and children needlessly imprisoned during Canada’s first national internment operations, especially on this occasion of the 100th anniversary of the end of the internment.”

### **About CFWWIRF**

The Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund was established to support projects that commemorate and recognize the experiences of all the ethno-cultural communities affected by Canada’s first national internment operations of 1914 to 1920.

*For more information on the Canadian First World War Internment Recognition Fund contact the Program Manager, Andrea Malysh, at [malysh@internmentcanada.ca](mailto:malysh@internmentcanada.ca) or toll free at 1-866-288-7931.*

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