



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 12, 2013

As the 6th anniversary approaches, Canada still shows a shameful disregard for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – On the eve of the sixth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), Canada's indigenous peoples continue to be dismayed over Canada's shameful opposition and disregard of this valuable human rights instrument.

The UNDRIP affirms the "minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world". It was overwhelmingly supported by the United Nations General Assembly on September 13, 2007, with 144 States voting in favour of adoption. Unfortunately, it took over three years for the UNDRIP to be "officially endorsed" by Canada (November 2010). Since then, Canada has maintained a dismissive position on the UNDRIP by indicating that such international instruments bear little impact on the day to day decisions of government.

"All Canadians must continue to put pressure on the Harper government to abandon their offensive and ill willed opposition to implementing and respecting the UN Declaration and the collective rights of the indigenous peoples in Canada and around the world", said Grand Chief Edward John, a member of the First Nations Summit Political Executive and a North American Representative to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

"Despite the endorsement by Canada of the UNDRIP, Canada continues to treat indigenous nations and peoples in this country as an afterthought on decisions that have a direct impact our peoples, our territories, our cultures and our way of life", added Chief John.

The UNDRIP affirms Indigenous Peoples' right of self-determination and requires that governments obtain free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples in decisions about resource development on their lands.

"Indigenous peoples in Canada are truly dismayed and frustrated by Canada's selective recognition of this valuable human rights instrument", said Cheryl Casimer, also of the FNS Political Executive.

"The UNDRIP should be fully recognized and implemented by Canada. Every decision made by governments which impacts indigenous peoples in this country should be in line with the requirements outlined by the UNDRIP", added Ms. Casimer.

-30-

The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. Further background information on the Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

For Further Information:

Grand Chief Edward John
First Nations Summit Political Executive
Cell: 778-772-8218

Colin Braker, Communications Director
First Nations Summit
604-926-9903