



News Release

First Nations Leadership Council Calls On the Harper Government to Support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

For Immediate Release:

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Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver BC - Following more than two decades of discussion and development, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples will finally be considered for adoption during the current session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

First Nations Summit Executive member, Grand Chief Ed John, who is presently in New York on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations and working with the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus, stated "This is an historic document for all Indigenous People and there is tremendous support for the adoption of the Declaration. However there is a real sense of betrayal with Canada's complete reversal of their historic leadership position of proponent to their current position of opposition. It is fully expected the Declaration will be supported by the majority of States at the United Nations."

"Canada's position is not substantiated or supported by international or domestic law. Canada is going against the grain as many States are providing solid support for the Declaration. It will be a momentous moment when the Human Rights of Indigenous People is recognized at the international level," commented BC Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Shawn Atleo. "We strongly urge Canada to join other States and adopt the Declaration without delay."

Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, observed "Since the federal election, Canada's discriminatory actions against Indigenous People at both the national and international levels have been utterly shameful and disgraceful. As a Council member of the Human Rights Council, Canada accepted the responsibility to uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of Human Rights. Canada, a true defender of Human Rights? We think not!"

The Declaration was adopted by the UN Human Rights Council this past June and was recommended for adoption by the General Assembly. Canada was one of few countries to vote against the Declaration in June and is currently lobbying against the Declaration.

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