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FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL MEETING OF MINISTERS ON
ABORIGINAL CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

A Declaration of the First Nations

A Declaration of The First Nations

We the Original Peoples of this Land know the Creator put us here.

The Creator gave us Laws that govern all our relationships to live in harmony with nature and mankind.

The Laws of the Creator defined our rights and responsibilities.

The Creator gave us our spiritual beliefs, our languages, our culture, and a place on Mother Earth which provided us with all our needs.

We have maintained our freedom, our

languages, and our traditions from time immemorial.

We continue to exercise the rights and fulfill the responsibilities and obligations given to us by the Creator for the land upon which we were placed.

The Creator has given us the right to govern ourselves and the right to self-determination.

The rights and responsibilities given to us by the Creator cannot be altered or taken away by any other Nation.

Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Principles

1. The aboriginal title, aboriginal rights and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada, including:

- (a) all rights recognized by the Royal Proclamation of October 7th, 1763;
- (b) all rights recognized in treaties between the Crown and nations or tribes of Indians in Canada ensuring the spiritual concept of Treaties;
- (c) all rights acquired by aboriginal peoples in settlements or agreements with the Crown on aboriginal rights and title;

are hereby recognized, confirmed, ratified and sanctioned.

2. "Aboriginal people" means the First Nations or Tribes of Indians in Canada and each Nation having the right to define its own Citizenship.

3. Those parts of the Royal Proclamation of October 7th, 1763, providing for the rights of the Nations or tribes of Indians are legally and politically binding on the Canadian and British Parliaments.

4. No law of Canada or of the Provinces, including the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the Constitution of Canada, shall hereafter be construed or applied so as to abrogate, abridge or diminish the rights specified in Sections 1 and 3 of this Part.

- 5. (a) The Parliament and Government of Canada shall be committed to the negotiation of the full realization and implementation of the rights specified in Sections 1 and 3 of this Part.
- (b) Such negotiations shall be internationally supervised, if the aboriginal peoples parties to those negotiations so request.
- (c) Such negotiations, and any agreements concluded thereby, shall be with the full participation and the full consent of the aboriginal peoples affected.

6. Any amendments to the Constitution of Canada in relation to any constitutional matters which affect the aboriginal peoples, including the identification or definition of the rights of any of those peoples, shall be made only with the consent of the governing Council, Grand Council or Assembly of the aboriginal peoples affected by such amendment, identification or definition.


7. A Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Protection Office shall be established.

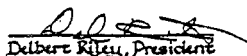
8. A declaration that Indian Governmental powers and responsibilities exist as a permanent, integral fact in the Canadian polity.

9. All pre-confederation, post-confederation treaties and treaties executed outside the present boundaries of Canada but which apply to the Indian Nations of Canada are international treaty agreements between sovereign nations. Any changes to the treaties requires the consent of the two parties to the treaties, who are the Indian Governments representing Indian Nations and the Crown represented by the British Government. The Canadian Government is only a third party and cannot initiate any changes.

Joint Council of the National Indian Brotherhood

November 18, 1981


Chief Charles Wood
Chairman, Council of Chiefs


Delbert Riley, President
National Indian Brotherhood

