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**The State of Indigenous Peoples' Languages and Cultures  
in Canada**

**Joint Alternative Report by  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section on language, culture and identity demonstrates that Canada continues to institutionalize racial discrimination and assimilation against Indigenous peoples' human rights and fundamental freedoms through the imposition of their policies and programs which are based on the archaic legislation of the **1876 Indian Act**. According to the ICERD's definition of "racial discrimination", racial discrimination is the "...*distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.*"<sup>1</sup>

Canada is founded and based on two colonial legal fictions, Terra Nullius and the Doctrine of Discovery. These doctrines proclaimed that any land not occupied by Christians were considered empty and thus void of "civilized" peoples and would therefore become the property of the Crown.<sup>2</sup> Therefore in their conquest to dispossess Indigenous peoples of their lands, the colonial empire deemed and committed cultural genocide as a means to eradicate Indigenous peoples. European colonialism, and Canada's continuous praxis of colonialism has impacted Indigenous peoples and the resultant is the erosion and destruction of Indigenous identity, language, culture, governance and inherent rights.

Canada's assimilation policies were institutionalized through the **1876 Indian Act and the Indian Residential School System (IRSS)**. Indigenous children were kidnapped from their families by government authorities and sent to Residential Schools which were great distances away from their homes. At the Residential School, children were forced to learn English or French and were severely punished when they spoke their Indigenous languages.<sup>3</sup>

Indigenous communities experience a decline and eradication of their cultures and languages due to the impacts of the IRSS whereby the acculturation and adoption of Euro-Canadian values, religion and identity have replaced Indigenous languages, culture and values.

Canada's colonial praxis remains and is the basis of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples. The relationship, premised on the *Indian Act*, dictates, controls and thus governs the administration and control of Indigenous communities daily live. Band councils implement the Indian Act policies often under economic and political duress.

Thus in spite of Prime Minister Steven Harper *official apology* for the IRSS, the praxis of colonial assimilative laws and policies continues, causing the *official apology* to be hollow and void of any concrete action.

Reconciliation, a requisite framework of decolonization, is far from materializing in Canada. Although a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has been established, the TRC addresses the emotional and physical damages experienced by IRSS survivors.

However, the TRC does not address the dispossession of Indigenous nations' lands, nor the negative impact on communities' identity, languages, culture, custom and traditional governance.

A Statistics Canada study estimated that of the **53 languages found in Canada only 3 are expected to survive to the end of this century.**<sup>4</sup> Those languages expected to survive include Inuktitut, Cree, and Anishnabe.

International human rights instruments that support Indigenous peoples' right to protect their identity include numerous articles included in the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.** For instance, Article 13.1 states that: *"Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retains their own names for communities, places and persons."*

Other articles within the UNDRIP relating to language include articles 14, 15, 16, 31 and are there are other articles interrelated to language and culture.

As well, in the **ICERD Article 2.1(c)**, **"states are required to review their policies and if they are discriminatory, are required to "rescind or nullify any laws and regulations with the effect of creating or perpetuating racial discrimination wherever it exists"**.

**Examining Canada's current laws and polices, the evidence of colonial racism and assimilation are clear in the continued existence and implementation of the 1876 Indian Act.** The extent of which is seen in Canada's provinces and territories imposed education policies. While discussions of replacing the Indian Act have been under way for several decades, very little action has been done by Canada to replace it.

According to UNESCO: *"Canada's Aboriginal languages are among the most endangered in the world."*<sup>5</sup> UNESCO's statement is supported by the Office of the Auditor General's 2011 Annual Report which noted:<sup>6</sup>

*"We noted that INAC used a funding formula dating back to the 1980s and lacked information that would enable it to compare costs with those of providing comparable education services in the provinces. Consequently, the Department did not know whether the funding it provided to First Nations was appropriate."*

Federal education funding for First Nations' schools are transferred to provinces and territories that impose their own curriculum guidelines that are in accordance with Canada's two official languages and curriculum. Federal and provincial standards are imposed and in order for First Nations schools to receive funding and to be "legally" recognized they must abide by those standards. Indigenous languages therefore become marginalized within the federal and provincial education curriculums.

It is incumbent upon Indigenous peoples to revitalize their languages and cultures. The challenges are daunting considering the inter-generational impacts of the IRSS, cultural shaming and the provincial educational requirements. Due to such institutional and cultural barriers, a majority of parents agree to their children be schooled in one of the two official languages in Canada.

**The Canadian Indian Act continues to govern and control Indigenous peoples' lives. Communities are controlled by the state's economic prerogative. This places communities under duress through funding caps controlled by government bureaucrats.<sup>7</sup> Such duress constrains and undermines Indigenous peoples' opposition to colonial assimilation policies.**

Indigenous identity, culture, language, community, nation and land are inter-related. It is therefore important to understand that Indigenous language revitalization cannot be viewed in isolation. Indigenous language revitalization must be in concert with the **acknowledgement and recognition of Indigenous peoples' collective rights to their lands and resources.**

A disturbing trend in the Canadian Government's position on Indigenous rights, is their attempt at reducing Indigenous peoples' collective rights to a level they consider as "race based" rights.<sup>8</sup> This position continues to dispossess Indigenous peoples' of their inherent rights to their lands and resources and is continually displayed in their official position of the UNDRIP in stating that it is "only aspirational". A position which the Special Rapporteur James Anaya has stated as being "manifestly untenable".<sup>9</sup>

Linguists have estimated that approximately **"90% of all existing languages may become extinct within the next 100 years"**.<sup>10</sup> Most Indigenous languages speakers are older, and in some cases spoken by a handful of elders. Indigenous languages will not survive unless children and youth are taught the value of their languages by elders and begin using it in their daily lives. Language revitalization is thus at a critical juncture and urgent action is needed. Indigenous languages are dying not solely because of colonization and globalization but due mainly because of "deliberate assimilation policies that sought to deny Indigenous peoples their own identities and cultures".<sup>11</sup>

The **right to education in one's own language** cannot be solely a right on paper or in law. It must be valued, supported and spoken by the people themselves. The elimination of racial discriminatory laws and policies must be eliminated to respect the self-determining rights of Indigenous peoples. The creation of any new laws or policies on education must be done in concert with Indigenous peoples and must promote the protection and perpetuation of languages.

As the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples stated: "... the revitalization of traditional languages is a key component in the creation of healthy individuals and communities".<sup>12</sup>

Given the negative impact of colonization and the IRSS it will take several generations to mitigate and restore Indigenous peoples' dignity and thus the restoration of healthy and vibrant communities. Language and culture are the foundation of Indigenous peoples' identity, spirituality, customs and laws which are dependent upon the land and its resources. It is imperative to Indigenous language and culture revitalization including the well being of Indigenous nations, that the following recommendations must be established and adhered to by Canada as well as its provinces and territories.

### **Recommendations:**

That;

1. The Canada's *Indian Act* be abolished; The *Indian Act* continues to colonize and de-legitimizes Indigenous peoples' right to their own nationality or citizenship, inherent rights, traditional governance, land ownership and well being.
2. Legislation be enacted that protects, promotes and perpetuates Indigenous languages and cultures which are developed in consultation and equal partnership with Indigenous peoples.
3. Indigenous education curriculum must be developed with the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous peoples and their communities.
4. Indigenous education be developed and evaluated by Indigenous language teachers and traditional knowledge holders.
5. Indigenous education funding formulas be reformulated that takes into account communities' needs and is accompanied with the requisite costs associated with Indigenous language and culture revitalization.
6. Indigenous language immersion programmes be established for children, parents and adults.
7. Indigenous language immersion programmes be accorded a level of funding in accord to Canadian French and English schools.
8. Incorporation of contemporary technologies and tools be requisite costs that are included in funding formulas to support and perpetuate Indigenous language acquisition, revitalization and retention.
9. Promotion of Indigenous languages be required and included in public documents, public administration and academic institutions.<sup>13</sup>
10. Reaffirmation and renewal of treaties be based upon a nation to nation peaceful coexistence, trust and respect.
11. A binding multilateral instrument be created for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

### **Introduction:**

**“Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”**

**--- Preamble, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

The Indian Residential School System (IRSS), the Indian Act, the Doctrine of Discovery; have all contributed to the current demise of Indigenous languages, culture, traditional governance and identity. While these forms of racist beliefs and doctrines may be dated they are sadly still practiced in Canada today through oppressive assimilation policies and doctrines under the Indian Act. The Indian Act dominates the daily lives of Indigenous peoples through restrictive INAC funding formulas and assimilative policies forcibly implemented through Band Councils under duress.

In spite of the Government of Canada's apology on June 11, 2008 for the Indian Residential School System the status quo of assimilation continues.<sup>14</sup> A negotiated settlement between the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit people and the Government of Canada has provided restitution to victims of the IRSS through monetary means. However the damages caused by the IRSS on the identity of Indigenous peoples has been devastating whereby language and culture become marginalized in Aboriginal communities list of priorities.

*“Students were often physically punished or humiliated if they were found to be speaking their native language or to be practising their traditional faiths. These measures led to a drastic decline of Aboriginal languages in Canada, and many of those that remain are not expected to survive much longer as the only fluent speakers in some communities are elders.”<sup>15</sup>*

The IRSS taught Indigenous children to be ashamed of their language, culture and identity. It was an ideology also inflicted upon Indigenous children who attended “Day Schools” in their communities. Punishment to those who were caught speaking their language included beatings, piercing of tongues, isolation, shaving of heads amongst other heinous acts by those hired to “care for the children”.<sup>16</sup>

Unfortunately, very little consideration has been given to the damages incurred by IRSS to Indigenous peoples' communities, identity, language, culture and traditional governing systems. These equally important issues are often demoted to last place while social ills rooted in colonization receive constant focus and attention. Funding formulas for Indigenous communities reflect these priorities leaving a scarcity of funds for language and culture.

### **Current Situation**

The issue of education on reserves has been of great debate for the past four decades. The motto and desire of Aboriginal peoples in Canada is “Indian Control over Indian Education” to signify the dissatisfaction with how curriculum and funding formulas do not meet the needs of Aboriginal communities. The desire of Aboriginal educators is to create curriculum whereby language, culture and values are of equal importance to the standard subjects taught in schools. It is also a perspective that signifies that curriculum must include tools for decolonization to combat the negative effects of the Indian Act.

Limited funding and the allocation of education funds by some bands to support other community services often leaves efforts on language revitalization and culture vulnerable to cuts and inconsistency in carrying out programs.

As the Office of the Auditor General reported in their annual report 2011<sup>17</sup>

*“We noted that INAC used a funding formula dating back to the 1980s and lacked information that would enable it to compare costs with those of providing comparable education services in the provinces. Consequently, the Department did not know whether the funding it provided to First Nations was appropriate.”*

This has resulted today in the marginalization of Indigenous languages and culture in school curriculum to a crisis situation whereby Statistic Canada has stated that “even those thought to have been stable have seen a decline in speakers.”<sup>18</sup>

**While most bands receive funding for education from the federal government, curricula must follow the guidelines as set out by the provinces and territories.** This has resulted in the dominance of French or English in primary and secondary schools unless the bands have sufficient resources themselves to subsidize their own language immersion schools or curricula.<sup>19</sup>

Indigenous peoples’ identity is based on language, culture, customs and relationship to the land. Identity is inextricably linked to the respect, stewardship and relationship to the land. **Traditional knowledge is held within Indigenous languages containing not solely a form of expression, but a form of thought processes and understanding of the world around us.** Even more so, traditional knowledge holders are individuals who continue the practice of traditions often times in opposition to community Christian followers.

Language is often recognized as the essence of a culture. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples has stated that the revitalization of traditional languages is a key component in the creation of healthy individuals and communities (RCAP 1996a:163).

Language is “not only a means of communication, but a link which connects people with their past and grounds their social, emotional and spiritual vitality” (Norris 1998: 8).

Language protection requires maintaining or increasing the number of fluent speakers and using the language as a medium of communication in everyday life - especially in the family.<sup>20</sup>

Fluent Indigenous language speakers are aging and many of them are dying exacerbating an already challenging situation in most communities. Speakers themselves must often learn the standardization of languages that were passed on orally and not written on paper. Therefore language retention for today’s youth must include the full participation of elders and Indigenous speakers in curriculum. It must also incorporate technology and modern tools of teaching some of which have yet to be created for school curriculum.



While some communities have incorporated language immersion schools, their validation and support seems to extend only to pre-school or primary school and often become short lived due to limited funding issues.

In 2009 Canada's Senate Committee attempted to pass a private members bill called Bill S-237 Aboriginal Languages of Canada Act<sup>21</sup> (short title).<sup>22</sup> Since that time no progress has been made to officially pass this Bill which would have "*recognized that the aboriginal peoples of Canada have the right to use, preserve, revitalize and promote their aboriginal languages and the freedom to share their cultural heritage through the use of those languages.*"

But efforts must proceed further than recognition and protecting of the rights of Indigenous peoples to protect their languages. It must include resources needed to teach the language and with the current rate of speakers of Indigenous languages declining and dying out, action and immediate support is required.

Like their peers within a globalized society Aboriginal youth are dependent on social media whereby English and French dominate a technologically based society. Youth are the heirs of our languages. The success of language revitalization is dependent upon them and so it is this generation's opportunity to sow the seeds of pride in their language, culture and identity. Aboriginal youth have stated the importance of language in the First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey conducted by the National Aboriginal Health Organization.<sup>23</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Linguists have estimated that approximately "**90% of all existing languages may become extinct within the next 100 years**".<sup>24</sup> Most speakers of Indigenous languages are older and in some cases are spoken by a handful of elders. Indigenous languages will not survive unless children and youth are taught the value of their language by elders and begin using them in their daily lives. As speakers die, so do the languages that have been spoken since ancient times. These ancient languages are dying not solely because of colonization and globalization but due mainly from "deliberate assimilation policies that sought to deny Indigenous peoples their own identities and cultures."<sup>25</sup>

Having **a right to education in one's own language** must be supported with the same opportunities as the state's two official languages: English and French. It cannot be solely a right on paper or in law. It must be valued, supported and spoken by the people themselves on a daily basis. The elimination of racial discriminatory laws and policies must coincide with new laws, policies and education in concert with Indigenous peoples that promotes its protection and not just a token motion by the state.<sup>26</sup>

De-colonization is long over due in states whose foundation is colonialism. The support and recognition of Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination must be viewed holistically, not piece by piece as has been done in the past. Moving forward includes

awareness of our shared histories, acceptance of our differences and in essence, the implementation of the Two Row Wampum treaty of peaceful co-existence.

As article 1 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* states:

3. The States Parties to the present Covenant ... **shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination, and shall respect that right**, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

The CERD's General Recommendation XXIII, para 4 in particular noting (a), (b) and (e) which state:

- “(a) Recognize and respect indigenous distinct culture, history, language and way of life as an enrichment of the State's cultural identity and to promote its preservation
- (b) Ensure that members of indigenous peoples are free and equal in dignity and rights and free from any discrimination, in particular that based on indigenous origin or identity;
- (e) Ensure that indigenous communities can exercise their rights to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs and to preserve and to practice their languages.

Canada cannot continue to impose what it deems as solutions to the problems facing Indigenous peoples in Canada without respecting Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination. The threat to Indigenous peoples culture and language, our very identity can no longer wait for government's political will to support revitalization efforts. The solutions are apparent, no further studies or conferences are required but direct action that will bring about positive changes to the state of Indigenous languages and culture in Canada.

*'It is estimated that, if nothing is done, half of 6000 plus languages spoken today will disappear by the end of this century. With the disappearance of unwritten and undocumented languages, humanity would lose not only a cultural wealth but also important ancestral knowledge embedded, in particular, in indigenous languages.'*<sup>27</sup>

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup> International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 1

<sup>2</sup> Doctrine of Discovery: “Any land that was not inhabited by Christians was available to be “discovered”, claimed, and exploited. If the “pagan” inhabitants could be converted, they might be spared. If not, they could be enslaved or killed.” <http://www.doctrineofdiscovery.org/>

<sup>3</sup> Canadian Heritage, *Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) Evaluation: Final Report* 26 February 2003, p. 3, “Students were often physically punished or humiliated if they were found to be speaking their native language or to be practising their traditional faiths. These measures led to a drastic decline of Aboriginal languages in Canada, and many of those that remain are not expected to survive much longer as the only fluent speakers in some communities are elders.”

<sup>4</sup> 2006 census Statistics Canada

<sup>5</sup> UNESCO 1996, *Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger of Disappearing*, Ed. Stephen A. Wurm, Paris, UNESCO, p.23

<sup>6</sup> OAG Chapter 4 June 2011, 4.15

<sup>7</sup> Canada has imposed a 2% funding cap on all First Nations communities since 1996

<sup>8</sup> Letter to the Calgary Herald by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, July 2006 as well as comments made by Jim Prentice former Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs on what they considered “race based rights in fisheries”. See Annex

<sup>9</sup> Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, James Anaya: Addendum: Cases examined by the Special Rapporteur (June 2009 – July 2010), UN Doc. A/HRC/15/37/Add.1 (15 September 2010), para. 112. [emphasis added]

<sup>10</sup> Naomi Kipuri, *State of the World’s Indigenous Peoples*, Chapter ii ,page 7, SOWIP

<sup>11</sup> IBID

<sup>12</sup> (RCAP 1996a:163).

<sup>13</sup> IBID

<sup>14</sup> Harper, Stephen (2008). *Prime Minister Harper offers full apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian Residential Schools system*. Retrieved 18 February 2009 from: <<http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=2149>>

<sup>15</sup> The Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Julian Walker  
Legal and Legislative Affairs Division 11 February 2009

<sup>16</sup> “Tearing Our Heart Out: Genocidal Practices of the Canadian Government”, Tsi Ronterihwanonhnha ne Kanienkeha, Kanehsatà:ke Language Resource Center, 1997, video

<sup>17</sup> OAG Chapter 4 June 2011, 4.15

<sup>18</sup> In the 2006 census data, however, only Inuktitut showed an increase in the number of mother tongue speakers. Cree showed a decrease in mother tongue identification from 76,475 in 1996 to 72, 680 in 2001 - a decrease of 3,795 or approx 5% nationwide. Anishnabe showed a decrease from 22,625 in 1996 to 20,890 in 2001 - a decrease of 1,735 or approx 8% nationwide.

<sup>19</sup> Funding for indigenous language projects remains scarce in the Province of Québec, Trudel, François (1996). *Aboriginal Language Policies of the Canadian and Quebec Governments*. In Jacques Maurais (ed.), *Quebec’s Aboriginal Languages: History, Planning and Development*. Toronto, ON: Multilingual Matters Ltd.: 100–128.

<sup>20</sup> Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996

<sup>21</sup> An Act for the advancement of the aboriginal languages of Canada and to recognize and respect aboriginal language rights, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament, 57-58 Elizabeth II 2009 the Senate of Parliament January 26 - December 30, 2009

<sup>22</sup> See Annex

<sup>23</sup> RHS 2002-03 National Aboriginal Health Organization, *Articulating the First Nations Wellness model* begins to respond to the need for the questions by defining wellness. It illustrates that you can’t have an indicator of wellness for First Nations People’s Health without also discussing culture, language, worldview, and spirituality. Page 11

<sup>24</sup> Naomi Kipuri, *State of the World’s Indigenous Peoples*, Chapter ii ,page 7, SOWIP

<sup>25</sup> IBID

<sup>26</sup> Walsh, Michael (2005). Will Indigenous Languages Survive? *The Annual Review of Anthropology* 34:293–315.

<sup>27</sup> UNESCO web site “Endangered languages”

Annex

1. footnote 8: re: Letter to Prime Minister Harper



**FEMMES AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC INC.**  
**QUEBEC NATIVE WOMEN INC.**

July 14, 2006  
Honorable Stephen Harper  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0A6

## **Subject: Comments on So-Called “Race-Based” Fisheries**

Dear Mr. Harper:

Quebec Native Women is disappointed by your comments in a letter sent to the Calgary Herald regarding Aboriginal fisheries.

We would like to reiterate what many Canadian citizens, members of the Aboriginal community, and members of the judiciary, in particular the Supreme Court of Canada, have been saying for years. Simply put, Aboriginal rights are not based on race.

Our constitutional rights are not based on physical characteristics. Furthermore, statements pointing to so-called racial characteristics perpetuate the misunderstandings that have existed about Aboriginal people for so long.

The source of our rights has been asserted repeatedly by the Supreme Court of Canada, who stated, "when Europeans arrived in North America, Aboriginal peoples were already here, living in communities on the land, and participating in distinctive cultures, as they had done for centuries".

In addition, in *R. v Kapp* the BC Court of Appeal recently rejected the argument that so-called racial fisheries violated the equality guarantees in the Constitution in five separate but concurring opinions.

As Aboriginal people, we have rights because we belong to distinct political communities who have existed on this land since time immemorial. It is the fact that we governed ourselves according to our own laws, values and traditions long before the arrival of any Europeans to our shores. Moreover, our hunting and fishing rights do not violate the Constitution – they are *protected* by the Constitution.

Furthermore, we have subsequently heard statements from the Minister of Indian Affairs indicating that the real issue with the Aboriginal fishery was the fact that it was commercial in nature. We would therefore like to point out that commercial fishing is not excluded by the doctrine of Aboriginal rights. In addition, no court has held that governments are prevented from granting commercial rights to Aboriginal people even when the Canadian judiciary has not recognized this right specifically. Programs geared towards rectifying historical injustices towards Aboriginal peoples should therefore be commended.

Aboriginal rights are a way of reconciling the existence of Aboriginal peoples within the Canadian context. We must all share this land now, and this needs to be done in a way that is mutually respectful of our distinctive cultures, traditions, and histories.

We understand that education regarding the history of Aboriginal people is an ongoing process and that a great deal of pressure is put on governments to resolve these issues. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to encourage you to support efforts to educate Canadians regarding Aboriginal cultures.

We would also like to offer our knowledge and services to create documents that could be used to enhance school curricula. In this way, the relationship between Aboriginal people and Canada can eventually be characterized in a manner that reflects our political and cultural existence as *peoples* and not merely as a race.

Sincerely,  
Ellen Gabriel  
President  
EG/ml

c.c. Hon. Jim Prentice, Minister of Northern and Indian Affairs Canada  
Gilles Duceppe, Bloc Québécois  
Bill Graham, Liberal Party  
Jack Layton, New Democratic Party  
Regional Chief, Ghislain Picard, Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador  
Grand Chief, Phil Fontaine, Assembly of First Nations  
President, Beverly Jacobs, Native Women Association of Canada

President, Michèle Asselin, Fédération des Femmes du Québec  
Chief Shawn Atleo, Regional Chief British Columbia  
Minister Geoffrey Kelley, SAA Government of Quebec

**Femmes Autochtones du Québec / Quebec Native Women** Business Complex River Road, P.O. Box 1989  
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### **Suggested Questions:**

Given that in the wake of the settlement process for legal claims by former students of Indian residential schools, the Canadian federal government's Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures proposed a national strategy to preserve, revitalize, and promote Indigenous languages and cultures within Canada, why did the Minister of Canadian Heritage cut \$160M of \$172.7M in Aboriginal languages funding?

Why are school curriculums and funding for Indigenous communities' education not inclusive of language and culture revitalization?

Why does Canada continue to implement education policies that furthers the assimilation of Indigenous peoples?

Indigenous language revitalization urgently requires more funding and human resources than is currently available to communities. Is Canada willing to provide immediate funding that will adequately meet the requirements for language revitalization?

Why does Canada state that the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is only an 'aspirational' document and not a international human rights standard?