

STATEMENT BY CANADA HOD (INAC SADM JEFF MOORE)
ENHANCED INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS
FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2017

Canada's commitment to a new relationship with Indigenous peoples extends to its foreign policy. As Canada's Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs said in her remarks on April 24, Canada commits its "unequivocal support" for Indigenous participation in the UN.

The consultation process, and the draft resolution demonstrate a way to allow Indigenous representatives to enrich and inform the deliberations of Member States, while ensuring the rights and privileges of Member States are in no way diminished.

This draft resolution offers options for a principled and practical way forward that reflect the recognition of Indigenous rights in the spirit of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples.

The Declaration is a powerful instrument that we are using to build a new relationship with Indigenous peoples in our country – a relationship based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.

The Government's ongoing dialogue with Indigenous peoples allows Canada to better understand and respond to their priorities and concerns. In the longer term, it will help to renew and strengthen those relationships.

Madame Chair, we look forward to working with distinguished colleagues and Indigenous representatives in the coming days on this draft, as we strive to use the Declaration to advance these same principles at the UN.

We strongly urge Member States to support the broadest possible range of venues for Indigenous representatives' participation so that Indigenous voices can be heard in discussions on issues that affect them.

With regard to the selection mechanism, we believe it is important to take into account gender balance, significant roles for both Indigenous representatives and Member States, and transparency.

Canada recognises that the effort to make progress on Indigenous representative's participation requires us all to balance a range of principles and practical issues.

We have been impressed with the creative and thoughtful ideas that Member States and Indigenous representatives have been putting forward. In consultation with our Indigenous partners, we look forward to our deliberations in the coming days.

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