



**Human Rights Council**  
**Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**  
**Ninth Session**  
**Item 3 – Indigenous Representation**  
**Statement of Canada**  
July 11, 2016

Good afternoon,

Once again thank you for the opportunity to address the members of the Expert Mechanism and the distinguished panel. Thanks as well to the PGA for their report.

We are all well aware that the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples affirms that Indigenous peoples should be provided the opportunity to participate on issues that affect them. Canada fully endorses this objective.

We are also encouraged by the breadth of support for the creation at the UN of a new Indigenous category of representation or accreditation. This would reflect the unique status of Indigenous peoples, their invaluable contribution to the UN's work, and their stake in its outcomes.

The issue of accreditation continues to be challenging. The UN needs an agreed system to ensure the efficient and effective participation of Indigenous peoples on matters that most affect their rights and interests.

In the current consultation process on enhanced Indigenous representation, Member States, as well as Indigenous peoples' organizations, have put forward a number of constructive ideas, and have also flagged some valid concerns. In different countries, Indigenous peoples organize themselves in different ways. We need to be respectful of those differences. At the same time, States must not be gatekeepers to Indigenous peoples.

In Canada, we will continue to engage Indigenous peoples to ensure that, on this important question, their views and concerns are heard. We encourage Member States to engage in domestic consultations with Indigenous peoples, and to include Indigenous peoples' recommendations in the upcoming negotiations.

We also urge that the process of enhancing Indigenous accreditation maintain its momentum. Once the current round of consultations concludes, we would like to see negotiations begin right after the Third Committee, in early December, to be finalized by spring or summer of 2017.

Thank you.