

6 b) Follow up of the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance.

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Speaking on behalf of the **Grand Council of the Crees**

Mr.Chairman, Watchiya.

I am very grateful for this opportunity to participate in and to address, on behalf of the Grand Council of the Crees, the twenty first Session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

The GCC has been very active in the WGIP and other international forums for more than 15 years, and we know well that the member states of the U.N. and the O.A.S. are showing colonial-style resistance to the full international affirmation of our rights.

In today's world, the issue of racism or racial discrimination arises in many contexts: both internationally and nationally. In relations to Indigenous Peoples globally, racism has too often been a central element in the colonial policies and practices of the States. Canada is only one stark example.

Colonialism and its accompanying doctrines of racial and cultural superiority, have led to serve and repeated violations of our basic Human Rights. As most of you are well aware, these violations include: widespread disposition of our lands and natural resources, suppression of our languages and cultures, outlawing of our spiritual practices, marginalization and exclusion.

Addressing this legacy and its consequences are formidable challenges. However, we must also deal with ongoing racism and racial discrimination, both as Indigenous Peoples and individuals. Discrimination against Indigenous Peoples is a continuing reality in the policies

of States and international and regional forums.

When our people negotiated the *First Modern Treaty* to be signed in Canada, we came to the table to negotiate for recognition of our on-going relationship with the other societies on our traditional lands, for affirmation of our stake in those lands, and our status and rights as a people. Canada by contrast, made it clear to us that it was seeking full and final settlement, to achieve “certainty” and “finality” so that Cree rights would never in the future interfere unexpectedly with resources extraction and destruction in Eeyou Istchee; Cree Territory.

In conclusion, I would like to say that for these reasons, we recommend that States such as Canada examine, in conformity with relevant international human rights instruments, norms and standards, their laws that have an effect to extinguish indigenous land rights in order to eradicate racism and racial discrimination towards indigenous peoples and individuals, whether, implicit, explicit, or inherent.

Thank You

ΨThe conclusion was taken from the book: *World Conference on Racism Program of Action* p.52 para.19