



CHIPPEWAS OF THE THAMES FIRST NATION



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“World Conference on Indigenous Peoples”
High-Level Plenary meeting of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly

22-23 September 2014
New York City
United Nations

Submission to Round table 1 “United Nations system action to implement the rights of indigenous peoples”.

Statement delivered by Jesse McCormick on behalf of the Deshkaan Ziibing Anishinaabeg, also known as Chippewas of the Thames First Nation.

Thank Mr. /Madam Chairperson,

My name is Jesse McCormick. I am a citizen of the Deshkaan Ziibing Anishinaabeg, also known as the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation. We are pleased to present the following statement to the High-Level Plenary meeting of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

We call ourselves Anishinabek which means the original people. We are known as the Ojibway, which are a band of the Algonquin language family who originally migrated to the Great Lakes area from the north-eastern region of North America. Our political alliances are with the Odawa (Ottawa) and Bodaywadami (Pottawatomi) and we together form the Three Fires Confederacy. Our nation is located in south-western Ontario, Canada and we continue to strive as a people to achieve our rightful place, as a nation, within Canadian society.

As noted in United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/65/198, this meeting has been convoked “to share perspectives and best practices on the realization of the rights of Indigenous peoples, including to pursue the objectives of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”. We wish to share with you two considerations that we believe are fundamental for achieving the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

First, we remind this assembly of its commitment to Indigenous Peoples in Article 37 of the Declaration to honour and respect the treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements concluded between States and Indigenous Peoples. Our path forward requires that we abide by and honour the agreements under which Indigenous Peoples chose to collaborate with States and our place within States is and should remain a product of those agreements and promises.



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Second, we call upon States, Indigenous Peoples, businesses and civil society to have confidence in the capacities of Indigenous Peoples to achieve great things and to soundly and competently manage our internal affairs. The sad history of colonialism has been perpetuated by the misguided belief that Indigenous Peoples cannot and should not exercise self-determination. We must overcome the damaging and debilitating effects of this lack of confidence. We have the capacity and the strength to achieve strong outcomes for our nations through independent decision-making that is accountable to our people. It is time for the decisions affecting Indigenous Peoples to be made by Indigenous Peoples and we ask that you respect our capabilities and our rights to govern ourselves in accordance with our institutions, cultures and traditions.

Honour the Treaties and trust in our abilities and together we can realize a better future for the seven generations.

Meegwetch.

Article 37

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the recognition, observance and enforcement of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements concluded with States or their successors and to have States honour and respect such treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements.

2. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as diminishing or eliminating the rights of indigenous peoples contained in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements.