



**Speaking Notes**

**For**

**The Honourable Marc Miller  
Minister of Indigenous Services Canada**

**United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues  
20<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Plenary Session**

*Item 7 Future work of the Permanent Forum, including issues considered by the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues, specifically challenges related to pandemics and responses to them:*

- *Report of the international expert group meeting on the theme “Indigenous peoples and pandemics”*
- *Study on the rights of indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of the exceptional measures adopted during the pandemic*

**Via Zoom**

**April 21, 2021**

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Thank you, Chair.

The Government of Canada commends the report of the international expert group meeting on the theme “Indigenous peoples and pandemics” and welcomes its recommendations.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the inequality and marginalization experienced by First Nations, Inuit and Métis, impacting their health, safety, food security, well-being and livelihoods.

Listening to the needs of Indigenous peoples and working collaboratively to address them is a key priority for Canada.

In Canada, First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities are leading the design and delivery of highly effective and culturally appropriate responses to COVID-19, with the wisdom of traditional ways of knowing and doing.

Canada has increased funding to support Indigenous communities to make their own decisions about where and what critical supports are needed. Canada supports and respects the decisions made by Indigenous leadership and communities based on their unique rights, interests and circumstances during the pandemic.

*Les défis de la violence familiale et de la santé mentale nécessitent une attention particulière. Les répercussions de la pandémie ne se feront pas pleinement sentir avant des années, et le Canada est déterminé à s'attaquer à ce problème dès maintenant.*

*Nous sommes tout à fait déterminés à travailler avec les communautés autochtones pour relever les défis à court terme posés par la COVID-19 et à élaborer des solutions à long terme fondées sur leur culture, leur langue et leurs connaissances traditionnelles.*

*Et malgré les défis posés par la pandémie, nous continuons de travailler avec les partenaires autochtones pour nous assurer que les communautés sont sécuritaires, que les services sont fournis et que le dialogue sur l'autodétermination peut se poursuivre virtuellement, là où c'est possible.*

Canada looks forward to future work and further dialogue on the effects and international responses to the pandemic so that we can learn from each other's experience in how to ensure that our responses include the meaningful engagement and involvement of Indigenous Peoples.

Meegwetch. Nakummek. Marci. Thank you. Merci.