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Permanent Mission of Canada  
to the United Nations  
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Mission permanente du Canada  
auprès des Nations Unies  
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10<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE EMRIP  
AGENDA ITEM 4: BUSINESS AND ACCESS FINANCIAL SERVICES  
INTERVENTION ON SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS WOMEN  
3:00 pm – 6:00 pm  
Tuesday, July 11, 2017

Mister Chair, Expert Members,

Canada thanks the Expert Mechanism for its study on the issue of good practices on access to business and financial services.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples calls on states to improve social and economic conditions, with particular attention to women's rights.

Canada is committed to empowering Indigenous women through business and is undertaking several initiatives in this regard.

As noted in the Draft Study, women around the world continue to face discrimination and inequality, which is also more than apparent in the employment and business sectors. In Canada, Indigenous women are less likely than men or non-Indigenous women to overcome economic barriers due to limited access to capital, financial literacy, and resources.

The Expert Mechanism's Draft Study notes that there is a lack of research on female indigenous entrepreneurship. In Canada, the Indian Business Corporation and the Business Development Bank of Canada are helping bridge this gap with a recently funded study on "Creating a New Narrative: Empowering Indigenous Women Through Entrepreneurship".

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Re-empowerment of Indigenous women is the key to re-asserting their rights.

Through its *Indigenous Entrepreneurship Program* and *Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business* programs, the Government of Canada provides strong examples of working effectively with Indigenous financial organizations, Indigenous Women's organizations, and entrepreneurs.

The Draft Study noted positive discrimination as an effective tool. By supporting a particular segment of the population, governments can enable entire communities to improve.

The Government of Canada has assisted Indigenous women entrepreneurs by providing access to capital to start-up or to expand their own business. Approximately 25% of business recipients for the *Indigenous Entrepreneurship Program* are Indigenous women.

Since 2010, the Government of Canada has worked in partnership with national and regional Indigenous women's organizations and has funded 27 Indigenous women's projects, totaling 3.7 million dollars. These projects have provided Indigenous women entrepreneurs with financial literacy training, access to business development tools, business and training networks and access to capital to help them establish, expand and run viable, sustainable businesses.



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As these Indigenous women build and grow their businesses, they are empowering not only their business, but themselves and their communities at large.

Positive discrimination programs by states are one tool for economic empowerment. Also, Canada's Trade Commissioner Service intends to undertake targeted and systematic efforts to reach out to Indigenous entrepreneurs to enhance their awareness of international business opportunities, the benefits of international trade, and the supports available to them. Canada would also be pleased to share in writing examples of Indigenous governments and financial institutions creating a positive business environment together. These too are tools for attracting capital, which the Study might note.

Merci. Thank you. Migwiich. Kuyanamik. Marsi