



CANADA

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The Permanent Mission of Canada  
to the United Nations  
at Geneva

La Mission permanente du Canada  
auprès des Nations Unies  
à Genève

**UNITED NATIONS WORKING GROUP  
ON INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS  
NINETEENTH SESSION, JULY 23 - 27, 2001**

**STATEMENT BY THE OBSERVER DELEGATION OF CANADA ON:  
WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION,  
XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE**

**DELIVERED BY JOHN SINCLAIR  
SENIOR ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER  
DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT  
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA  
GENEVA, JULY 27, 2001**

**DES NATIONS UNIES GROUPE DE TRAVAIL SUR LES POPULATIONS  
AUTOCHTONES  
DIX-NEUVIEME SESSION, 23 - 27, JUILLET 2001**

**ALLOCUTION DE LA DÉLÉGATION OBSERVATRICE DU CANADA SUR  
LA CONFÉRENCE MONDIALE CONTRE LE RACISME, LA DISCRIMINATION  
RACIALE, LA XÉNOPHOBIE ET L'INTOLÉRANCE QUI Y EST ASSOCIÉE**

**ALLOCUTION DE LA DELEGATION D'OBSERVATEURS DU CANADA  
PRONONCÉE PAR JOHN SINCLAIR  
SOUS-MINISTRE ADJOINT SENIOR  
GENÈVE, LE 27 JUILLET 2001**

The priorities that Canada would like to see included in the Declaration and Programme of Action for the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) have been clearly stated at national, regional and international preparatory consultations and conferences.

With respect to indigenous peoples, these priorities include: acknowledging injustices in history, including past treatment of indigenous peoples; identifying indigenous peoples, *inter alia*, as vulnerable to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; stressing the continuing need for action to overcome persistent racism and racial discrimination that affect indigenous peoples and individuals; addressing the manifestations of multiple forms of discrimination, or intersectionality, that affect indigenous peoples and, in particular, indigenous women, youth and children; focussing on innovative, forward-looking, multi-dimensional, holistic and appropriate redress and remedies; and the inclusion of indigenous peoples, including youth, in WCAR processes and in the development and implementation of measures at all levels aimed at eradicating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

In furtherance of these priorities, Canada has undertaken a number of activities, both nationally and internationally.

Nationally, in preparation for the World Conference, the Department of Canadian Heritage has structured a comprehensive consultation process with the indigenous peoples in Canada. The purpose of this process is to engage indigenous Canadians in open discussions to inform the Government of Canada, and other members of civil society, what racism means to them, how it affects them and what we as a country can do together to eradicate racism, racial discrimination xenophobia and related intolerance. A 15-member Aboriginal Advisory Committee, including representatives of the national Aboriginal organizations, communities, women and youth, has been appointed to advise the Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women) on Canada's preparations for the World Conference. Additionally, over the past year, a cross-section of indigenous representatives have participated in seven regional civil society consultations held across Canada and in a national consultation conference. Canada also held a separate national Aboriginal consultation conference on the WCAR. These consultations are contributing to the development of forward-looking national strategies and to Canada's positions and priorities for the World Conference.

Canada has and continues to make progress in building a society in which indigenous peoples can be free of all forms of discrimination and can realize their full potential as peoples and individuals. Many of these current national initiatives have been described in other statements by the Canadian delegation to this session of the Working Group.

Canada believes that welcoming the voices and other contributions of indigenous peoples, and of civil society generally, are essential to achieving a meaningful and

successful Declaration and Programme of Action at Durban. Canada has supported and provided considerable funds to facilitate indigenous people's participation in regional and global preparatory meetings in Santiago and Geneva, and in other fora where indigenous views on the effects of racism have been elaborated. Canada will continue to ensure that indigenous representatives are able to attend and directly participate where possible in the World Conference, the Youth Summit, the NGO Forum and other related events in Durban in August and September.

Canada believes it is indisputable that indigenous peoples have been, and continue to be, affected by manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. A wide range of issues and proposals have been raised by indigenous peoples both in Canada's national WCAR consultations and in international preparatory and satellite meetings. Some of these issues, and proposed strategies and measures to address them, may elude the consensus necessary for them to be addressed explicitly in the WCAR Declaration and Programme of Action. Some of them fall outside the mandate and objectives of the World Conference. Some of them are being addressed more appropriately in other processes at national levels, at the United Nations and in other multilateral fora. Nevertheless, Canada is committed to working with other governments and with indigenous peoples in efforts to ensure that the Declaration and Programme of Action have resonance and practical utility for indigenous peoples in our collective struggle to eradicate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance wherever it may exist.