



Native Women's Association of Canada

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Outcome Document adopted by all United Nations member States, except Canada

September 24, 2014 (Ottawa, ON) - The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) has been participating in the first World Conference on Indigenous Peoples (WCIP), which is happening at the United Nations in New York City this week. NWAC is pleased that all member states adopted the Outcome Document, but is disappointed in the position taken by Canada.

Indigenous Peoples have gathered from around the globe in an attempt to advance their rights as Indigenous Peoples, which includes the implementation of the principles and objectives of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Participants at the World Conference officially adopted an action-oriented "Outcome Document" Monday, which deals specifically with the implementation of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the achievement of internationally agreed upon development goals.

NWAC President Michèle Audette stated, "The adoption of the Outcome Document paves the way to implementing these rights because they are recognized at the highest level of the United Nations structure," She then continued, "Had Canada not objected, this would have seen all members States collaborate with Indigenous Peoples to implement the principles of the UN Declaration. It is worrisome that Canada is the only one at the international level who is objecting to fully adopting the Outcome Document. This shows a lack of true commitment towards the process of reconciliation between the Indigenous Peoples and Canada."

Canada has listed their primary objection for signing the Outcome Document as the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) by Indigenous Peoples on activities that would interfere with their land and their rights in their territories. Although this principle is throughout the UNDRIP and has been echoed by the Supreme Court of Canada cases, the Canadian Government is refusing to sign on.

NWAC will sign on to Joint Statements and make interventions while at the WCIP that reflect the UNDRIP in an attempt to see the principles later implemented within Canada, particularly with respect to the safety and well-being of Aboriginal women. NWAC will continue to hold Canada accountable for the statements and agreements they make regarding implementing the rights of Indigenous Peoples so that they result in concrete action in Canada.

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is founded on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nations and Métis women within First Nation, Métis and Canadian societies. As a national organization representing Aboriginal women since 1974, NWAC's mandate is to achieve equality for all Aboriginal women in Canada.

Information on the first World Conference on Indigenous Peoples is available at:
<http://www.un.org/en/ga/69/meetings/indigenous/#&panell-1>

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