

native women's association of canada

151 Bay Street, Suite 806
Ottawa, Ontario
K1R 7T2
(613) 236-6057

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NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES AND BELIEFS

We believe that it is the fundamental right of every person of aboriginal descent to be recognized as such.

We believe that the aboriginal people hold a special relationship with the British Crown that cannot be extinguished by any Canadian government.

We believe that the aboriginal people of this land belong to sovereign nations that have the right of self-determination.

We believe that the aboriginal rights, set out in the treaties, agreements and conventions and as based on our historical claim to this land, must be recognized.

We believe that the government of Canada must recognize that the aboriginal people have the right to determine their own form of government.

We believe that it is the right of the aboriginal people to determine their own citizenship, and that it is the right of all people of aboriginal descent who so wish to be recognized as such.

We believe that it is the right of the aboriginal people to retain the uniqueness and vitality of their cultures, customs, languages and heritages.

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We believe that no act of the governments of Canada may abrogate, expropriate or extinguish aboriginal rights, including treaty rights.

We believe that the aboriginal people have the right to negotiate as sovereign nations with the governments of Canada to change, alter or amend aboriginal rights through treaties or agreements.

We believe that it is the fundamental right of Native women to have access and participation in any decision-making process, and full protection of the law without discrimination based on sex or marital status.

We believe that the rights of our children must be protected.

We believe that Native women and children must have equal access to all social, economic, health and educational opportunities.

We believe that the rights of aboriginal people must extend to all people of aboriginal descent no matter where they live.

We believe that our future lies as sovereign nations with our rights as women protected. We desire to live under a government of our own making.

We believe that the Constitution of Canada and not the Charter of Rights must state that the aboriginal people belong to sovereign nations and that the Government of Canada will honour our sovereignty.

We believe that the Charter of Rights must provide protection for all women.

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PREAMBLE

We, the aboriginal women of this land, are making representation to the Government of Canada to declare the sovereignty of our peoples and to serve notice that we intend to relate to Confederation as equal partners with the Federal and Provincial Orders of Government.

As women we speak for ourselves, our children and the generations yet unborn, and join with the aboriginal peoples of this land in unity to declare that our rights, our nations and our sovereignty are ours to proclaim and ours to exercise.

We want you to convey to the Governments of Canada our willingness to negotiate and participate in such a partnership.