



October 19th, 2023

The Honourable Mélanie Joly, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Global Affairs
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Joly,

Re: *American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

The Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples is writing to you to urge the Government of Canada to affirm its unequivocal endorsement of the *American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (the *American Declaration*). As a member of the Organization of American States (OAS), Canada is legally bound by the consensus decision made by the OAS General Assembly to adopt the *American Declaration*. No OAS State, including Canada, opted to call for a vote.

This is consistent with the Government of Canada's commitment to the full implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (the *UN Declaration*). It is also consistent with Canada's support issued at the Organization of American States' General Assembly in June 2017 of a four-year Plan of Action for the implementation of the *American Declaration*.

Indigenous Peoples and supportive allies were highly engaged, along with government of Canada representatives, in the OAS negotiations of the *American Declaration*, recognizing the importance of a regional human rights instrument that complements and builds upon the *UN Declaration*.

We have attached for you a paper prepared by lawyer Paul Joffe on this subject, outlining in detail the imperative for Canada to fully endorse the *American Declaration*.

It is important for Canada to remain in a leadership position in the advancement of human rights in the Americas and globally. We view an announcement of Canada's commitment to full implementation of the *American Declaration* as an essential step to take in this regard. We believe that Human Rights Day, on Sunday, December 10th, 2023, would be an appropriate time for this announcement as it affirms Canada's position as a global leader for human rights.

Yours, in partnership and mutual respect,

British Columbia Assembly of First Nations
British Columbia Treaty Commission
Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers) (cont.)



Cheryl Knockwood, Chair, Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

First Nations Summit

Indigenous World Association

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

Katsi'tsakwas, Ellen Gabriel

Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)/Cree Nation Government

Hup-Wil-Lax-A, Kirby Muldoe, Grassroots Human Rights Defender

Laurie Buffalo, Member of Samson Cree Nation

Naiomi W. Metallic, Chancellor's Chair in Aboriginal Law and Policy, Associate Professor,
Schulich School of Law, Dalhousie University

Sashia Leung

Professor Sheryl Lightfoot, University of British Columbia

Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs

Dr. Willie Littlechild, KC, IPC (International Chief for Treaties 6, 7 and 8)

CC:

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P. Prime Minister of Canada

The Honourable Arif Virani, P.C., M.P. Minister of Justice

The Honourable Gary Anandasangaree P.C., M.P. Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and
Northern Affairs Canada