

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Symposium will mark 250th Anniversary of “Legal Touchstone” for Aboriginal Canadians

(Ottawa, Ontario – Sept 16, 2013)

Ask Canadians what important events occurred in 1763 and they might reply that the Treaty of Paris was signed, ending the Seven Years' War and establishing British control over eastern North America. A few may even know Chippewa peoples captured Fort Michilimackinac by diverting the garrison's attention with a game of lacrosse, then chasing the ball into the fort.

But not many will know about Britain's Royal Proclamation of October 7, 1763, a legal touchstone that shaped North America and laid the foundations for treaties with Aboriginal peoples, land claims, and self-government agreements.

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 set a standard for “honourable dealing” with Aboriginal peoples. It was the basis for treaty negotiations in Upper Canada following the American War of Independence, across the Prairies in the nineteenth century, and after 1973 when the Government of Canada agreed to negotiate comprehensive land claims agreements in areas where historic treaties had not been signed.

“The Royal Proclamation of 1763 is a foundational document in Canadian history,” said Mitchell Stevens, president of Nisga'a Nation and co-chair of the Land Claims Agreements Coalition “because it affirms the government-to-government relationship between First Nations and the Crown, and forms the basis of modern-day treaty making requirements in Canada.”

On October 7, 2013, the Land Claims Agreements Coalition will commemorate this valuable piece of Canadian history with “Creating Canada: From the Royal Proclamation of 1763 to Modern Treaties”, a symposium marking the document's 250th anniversary. The symposium will be held in the Auditorium at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, in Gatineau.

“‘Creating Canada’ will provide a critical dialogue and understanding of the long history underlying treaties and land claims agreements in Canada,” said Cathy Towtongie, president of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., and co-chair of the Land Claims Agreements Coalition. “Anyone who works with Aboriginal peoples will learn a lot from this Symposium.”

For more information, including how to register, visit www.landclaimcoalition.ca .

For more information:

Patti Black, Coordinator, Land Claims Agreements Coalition:

cell: 613-453-0788

email: black@consilium.ca

web: www.landclaimcoalition.ca