

LAND CLAIMS AGREEMENTS COALITION



Council of Yukon First Nations
Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
Gwich'in Tribal Council
Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
Kwanlin Dun First Nation
Makivik Corporation

Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
Nisga'a Nation
Nunatsiavut Government
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
The Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
Tlicho Government

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For Immediate Release

Land Claims Agreements Coalition Releases Model Canadian Treaty Implementation Policy

(March 3, 2009, Ottawa, Ontario) The Land Claims Agreements Coalition today released an urgently-needed model national policy on land claims agreement implementation, "Honour, Spirit and Intent: A Model Canadian Policy on the Full Implementation of Modern Treaties Between Aboriginal Peoples and the Crown" at a press conference at the Parliament on March 3.

With few exceptions, the broad promises of modern treaties remain unfulfilled, and relationships between the federal Crown and many Aboriginal treaty organizations continue to deteriorate. Numerous independent authorities (including a Senate Committee, the Auditor General and a UN Special Rapporteur) have highlighted the many treaty implementation challenges still facing most signatories of modern treaties.

"Coalition members from coast to coast to coast hope that this Model Policy will initiate a national discussion concerning ongoing federal-Aboriginal relations in the modern treaty context," said Paul Kaludjak, Co-Chair of Coalition and President of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

"The future survival and well-being of our treaty peoples—and by extension the honour of the Crown and all Canadians—depends on a turnaround leading to full implementation of our treaties with the Crown," said Kevin McKay on behalf of Nelson Leeson, Co-Chair of Coalition and President of the Nisga'a Nation.

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The Coalition believes that a new national policy is urgently required to ensure that all agencies of the Government of Canada implement modern treaties fully, according to their letter, their spirit and intent, and the fundamental objectives they embody.

Since 1975, the federal Crown has entered into 21 modern treaties with Aboriginal peoples across Canada. These agreements involve more than half of the country's lands, waters and resources and are recognized and affirmed in the Constitution of Canada. While each modern treaty is different, they all include important promises of employment, education, cultural protection, training, socio-economic development opportunities and much more.

More information about the Coalition and the Model Policy is available on the Coalition website at: www.landclaimscoalition.ca, or contact:

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