



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chiefs Call on Canada to Halt Repealing the Indian Act and Meet with Treaty Nations About Unfinished Treaty Business

(June 20, 2023, Treaty 4, 6, 7 and 8 Territory) Treaty Chiefs (Onion Lake Cree Nation, O'Chiese First Nation, Kehewin Cree Nation, Saddle Lake First Nation, Tsuut'ina Nation, James Smith Cree Nation, Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Beaver First Nation, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Cold Lake First Nation, Alexander First Nation, Frog Lake First Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Montana First Nation, Ermineskin Cree Nation and Ochapowace Nation) on behalf of their members have been following the development of Canada's *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Action Plan* (UNDA). At no point has Canada met with our Treaty Nations to discuss either the goals or the methods within the UNDA Final Action Plan – a plan which we know will impact us for generations. Treaty Chiefs of our Nations have received reliable information of the federal government's intention to repeal the Indian Act as part of this "Plan". To make this announcement on the summer solstice, one of the most sacred days for our peoples is deceptive – while our people are celebrating our culture, language and existence. Okimaw Lewis from Onion Lake Cree Nation said "As a Treaty Nation, we are disappointed that Canada has moved ahead to develop a termination action plan – a reboot of the failed 1969 white paper - without Treaty Nations that will have lasting generational impacts on our peoples. For example, Treaty citizens were transformed into statutory Indians in 1951 – there have been no discussions about the impacts of this, if the *Indian Act* was immediately repealed".

"Abolishing the Indian Act without returning to the path of Treaty continues to violate our right to free prior and informed consent. Repeal of the *Act* puts our land at risk and moves us into a municipal structure of land governance - in violation of our Treaty. We are sovereign Nations that made international Treaties" said Xakijji Roy Whitney from Tsuut'ina Nation. Canada would not exist without the Treaties and we call on the federal government to enter into meaningful discussions to talk about the true spirit and intent of Treaty. We reject Canada's ongoing agenda that aims to transform us into municipalities and another level of local government.

The government of Canada is walking down an unfortunate path away from Treaties. The treaties made with the Imperial Crown allowed for the creation, of a new Dominion called 'Canada' through an Act of British Parliament in 1867. The Honour of the Crown needs to bring some sense, and halt the present process underway in Ottawa. Kehewin Cree Nation Chief Trevor John said, "The honour of the Crown is at stake and the Chiefs request an immediate meeting between our Sovereign Treaty Nations and the Crown to discuss

unfinished Treaty business". In light of the generational impacts these decisions will have, we are calling on all Treaty Peoples and Nations to organize a day of prayer on June 21st and a day of action on July 1, 2023. Canada must know that we do not agree with their municipalisation agenda that aims to transform us into minorities and municipalities within our own lands.

Media Contact:

Reinetta Morningchild, Intergovernmental Affairs

Phone: (306) 344-7517

Email: reinetta.morningchild@onionlake.ca



**Onion Lake
Cree Nation**
TREATY NO.6 TERRITORY



*O'Chiese
First Nation*



FROG LAKE CREE NATION



Montana First
Nation



Alexis Nakota Sioux
Nation



Beaver Lake Cree
Nation



Louis Bull Tribe



**OCHAPOWACE
NATION**



Beaver First Nation



Ermineskin Cree
Nation