

“YOU DON’T LOOK INDIGENOUS!”

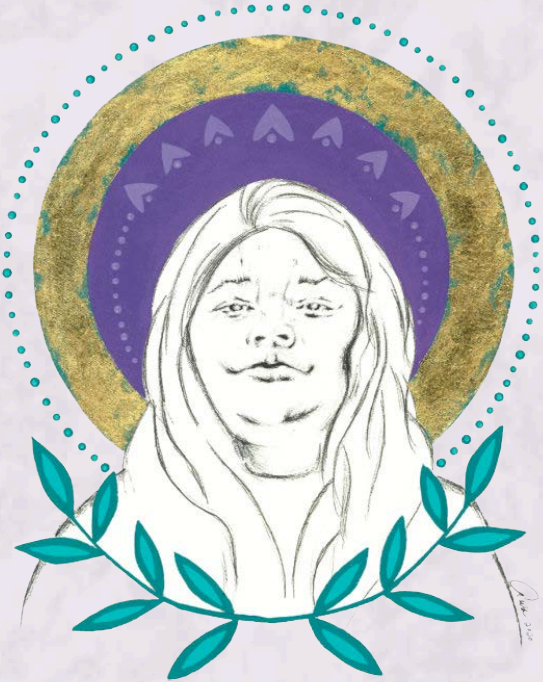
AND OTHER PREJUDICES



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Joyce's Principle aims to **guarantee to all Indigenous people the right of equitable access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services**, as well as the right to enjoy the best possible physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health.

Joyce's Principle requires the **recognition and respect of Indigenous people's traditional and living knowledge** in all aspects of health.



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A DEMOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA¹

Indigenous population

- 1 673 785 (4,9%) in Canada;
- 182 890 (2,3%) in Quebec.

The Indigenous population is young. In 2016, the average age of the Indigenous population was 32.1 years, almost 10 years younger than the average age of the non-Indigenous population (40.9 years).

Since 2006, the Indigenous population has increased by 42.5%, which is more than four times the growth rate of the non-Indigenous population over the same period.

Great diversity of cultural realities and identities

- 11 nations in Quebec;
- 64 nations in Canada.

In 2016, 867,415 Indigenous people lived in an urban area with a population of 30,000 or more, more than half (51.8%) of the total Indigenous population. From 2006 to 2016, the number of Indigenous people living in an urban area of this size increased by 59.7%.

¹ Statistique Canada. Aboriginal peoples in Canada: Key results from the 2016 Census, 2017. [Online] <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025a-eng.htm> (2 February 2021).

EVERY NATION AND
EVERY COMMUNITY HAS
ITS OWN HISTORY.



1 THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE DO NOT GET ALONG WITH EACH OTHER

Indigenous people* are not a homogeneous group. “Indigenous” is a general term, such as “European” or “African”: it encompasses different nations, each with its own characteristics and realities. While it can be said that the relationship to the land is important for all indigenous peoples, the same cannot be said for languages, traditions and social organization, which differ from one community to another. Each nation and community has its own history and specific situations that affect the decisions it makes and the interests it defends.

**LIKE WESTERN SOCIETIES
AND OTHER PEOPLES AROUND
THE WORLD, THE HISTORY
OF RELATIONS BETWEEN
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IS
COMPLEX AND INTERTWINED
WITH WARS AND ALLIANCES.**

Like Western societies and other peoples around the world, the history of relations between indigenous peoples is complex and intertwined with wars and alliances. Although each Indigenous nation and community has its own history, the impacts of colonization, such as intergenerational trauma² are still being felt by most, to varying degrees.

Thus, there is solidarity among Nations, for example through the collaborative work of organizations and groups such as the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador, Quebec Native Women and through various social movements that have existed for more than 60 years to defend the rights of Indigenous peoples.

* **Words in pinkish-red bold, see definitions p.23-24**

² Aboriginal Healing Foundation. A Healing Journey. Final Report. Summary Points, 2006. [Online] <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/final-report-summary-3.pdf> (2 February 2021).



ACCORDING TO
STATISTICS CANADA,
60% OF INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES WITH
INDIAN STATUS LIVE
OFF-RESERVE AND
PAY TAXES.

2

PREJUDICE

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DO NOT PAY TAXES

For a member of Indigenous communities to not pay income, municipal or sales taxes, he or she must have Registered **Indian** status, reside and work on an Indian reserve.³ This exemption comes from taxation under the Indian Act. It does not apply to **Inuit**, **Métis** and non-status Indians or to Indigenous people living off-reserve.

IN ORDER FOR A MEMBER OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES TO NOT PAY INCOME, MUNICIPAL OR SALES TAXES, HE OR SHE MUST HAVE REGISTERED INDIAN STATUS, RESIDE AND WORK ON AN INDIAN RESERVE.

According to Statistics Canada, 59.7% of Indigenous people with Indian status live off-reserve and pay taxes. Why? Because there aren't enough jobs on reserves to employ everyone who wants to work, because reserves are often overcrowded, and because more than half (51.8%) of Indigenous people choose to live outside their communities to study, work, or other reasons.

Exemption from taxes, which is only applicable in specific situations, cannot therefore be considered a "privilege". It is part of the **Indian Act**, which gives Indians minor status in the eyes of the federal government. This comes with a whole host of disadvantages: not being able to take out a mortgage, not being able to write a will, not being able to dispose of one's property, not being able to own land, not being eligible for loans (for example, to start a business), regardless of one's financial situation, etc.

³ Radio-Canada. Chronique juridique : les réserves indiennes, ces terres de « Sa Majesté », 2017. [Online] <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1030593/chronique-juridique-les-reserves-indiennes-ces-terres-de-sa-majeste> (27 June 2018).

INDIGENOUS
PEOPLE OFF AND
ON RESERVES ARE
REQUIRED TO PAY
THEIR HYDRO-
QUÉBEC BILLS.

3 PREJUDICE

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE DO NOT PAY THEIR HYDRO-QUÉBEC BILLS

Indigenous people off and on reserves are required to pay their Hydro-Québec bills like everyone else. However, like everyone else living in Quebec, they may have access to payment facilities, given the very low incomes of some families. In addition, it should be noted that some indigenous communities in Quebec and Canada, such as Kitcisakik in Abitibi-Témiscamingue, do not have electricity.

**SOME INDIGENOUS
COMMUNITIES IN QUEBEC AND
CANADA, SUCH AS KITCISAKIK
IN ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE,
DO NOT HAVE ELECTRICITY.**

HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE ANNUAL AMOUNT EACH NATIVE PERSON RECEIVES IN EXCHANGE FOR SIGNING A TREATY IS TRIVIAL CONSIDERING THE SIZE OF THE TERRITORY CEDED.

4
PREJUDICE

THE NATIVE PEOPLE RECEIVE CHEQUES FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Following the signing of **treaties** ceding their territory to the government, members of some indigenous nations have received and continue to receive money. However, this is not the case for the vast majority of indigenous people in Quebec, who have not signed agreements with the federal government.

These agreements were mainly reached with the indigenous peoples of western Canada, who signed numbered treaties in the 19th and early 20th centuries. However, it should be noted that the annual amount of money that each indigenous person receives in exchange for signing a treaty is trivial considering the size of the territory ceded and the economic benefits that have contributed to Canada's prosperity. Moreover, these sums have not been revalued based on the current value of the currency. For example, in Ontario, the amount paid per person is currently \$4 per year⁴, but this amount varies greatly from one nation to another.

FOR EXAMPLE, IN ONTARIO, THE AMOUNT PAID PER PERSON IS CURRENTLY \$4 PER YEAR.

⁴ Radio-Canada. *Des Autochtones veulent plus que les 4 \$ par année qu'ils reçoivent des gouvernements*, 2017. [Online] <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1057809/des-autochtones-veulent-plus-que-les-4-par-annee-qu'ils-recoivent-des-gouvernements> (27 June 2018).



**NATIVES ARE NOT
MIGRANTS.**

5 PREJUDICE

**“GO BACK TO WHERE
YOU CAME FROM!”**

Indigenous people are not migrants. Population movements took place thousands of years ago and led to the settlement of indigenous peoples throughout the Americas. It was the first inhabitants of the Americas who later saw several waves of immigration. They do not feel the need to “integrate”, because they have already settled in traditional territories that have been occupied for thousands of years.

**IT WAS THEREFORE THE FIRST
INHABITANTS OF THE AMERICAS
WHO LATER SAW SEVERAL
WAVES OF IMMIGRATION.**



THEY ARE NOT ASKING FOR PRECEDENCE OVER THOSE OF OTHERS, BUT THAT THEIR INTERESTS AND VISIONS BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.

B
PREJUDICE

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO INTEGRATE OR COLLABORATE

Indigenous peoples, like many peoples-including Quebecers-are proud of their history, their culture and their roots. For them, being assimilated would mean the loss of their identity. Their identities, norms, values, understandings and needs must be respected. They are not asking for precedence over those of others, but for their interests and visions to be taken into consideration. This has not been the case in the past and is still very little the case today.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, LIKE MANY PEOPLES - INCLUDING QUEBECERS - ARE PROUD OF THEIR HISTORY, CULTURE AND ROOTS.

One of the demands of indigenous peoples is to build nation-to-nation relations with Quebec and Canadian corporations. That does not mean that indigenous people do not feel they are Quebecers or Canadians. Each indigenous person has a special relationship with his or her identity. Some claim to be their own nation or community, while others recognize themselves as Canadians or Quebecers, for example.

7 PREJUDICE

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ARE STUCK IN THE PAST

Many of the historical events that affected the lives of Indigenous peoples - the Indian Act, **residential schools**, the **60s scoop** or the **Oka Crisis** - are not distant events in history. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada even speaks of cultural **genocide**⁵. Their repercussions in communities are still significant. This is called intergenerational impact: parents who have experienced these traumatic events pass on to their children the after-effects that resulted from them.

Indigenous peoples have the right to commemorate significant events in their history, just as other peoples around the world have experienced historical tragedies.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HAVE THE RIGHT TO COMMEMORATE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THEIR HISTORY, JUST LIKE OTHER PEOPLES AROUND THE WORLD.

However, it is true that indigenous people do not want to be reduced to these events. They are not peoples frozen in history! They want to be recognized for their contemporary realities and contributions, they want to improve their living conditions and build a better future. In fact, there are many positive leaders and inspiring projects carried out by Indigenous organizations and collectives across the country and in the province of Quebec.

THERE ARE MANY POSITIVE LEADERS AND INSPIRING PROJECTS BEING CARRIED OUT BY INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND COLLECTIVES.

⁵ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report, 2015. [Online] http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Final%20Reports/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf (2 February 2021).

WHILE THERE ARE
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE
WITH SUBSTANCE
USE PROBLEMS,
THEY DO NOT
REPRESENT THE
MAJORITY.



8
PREJUDICE

MOST INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ARE ALCOHOLIC AND HOMELESS

While there are some indigenous people with substance use problems, they do not represent the majority. In addition, it must be understood that many of these cases are directly or indirectly related to the residential school experience and its intergenerational impacts.

The same logic applies to homelessness: just because indigenous homeless people are found in cities does not mean that they represent all indigenous peoples. Rather, they are proportionately more numerous in some large centres, such as Montreal, compared to the rest of the population.

JUST BECAUSE YOU RUN INTO HOMELESS INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN THE CITY DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY REPRESENT ALL INDIGENOUS PEOPLE.

Several circumstances lead to homelessness: lack of education, health and financial problems, loss of self-esteem, broken ties with family or identity, lack of culturally safe resources for Indigenous people (including mental health), economic inequality, etc.



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ARE OPPOSED TO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

LIKE QUEBEC
SOCIETY, INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES MAY HAVE
DIVERGENT POSITIONS
ON DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS.

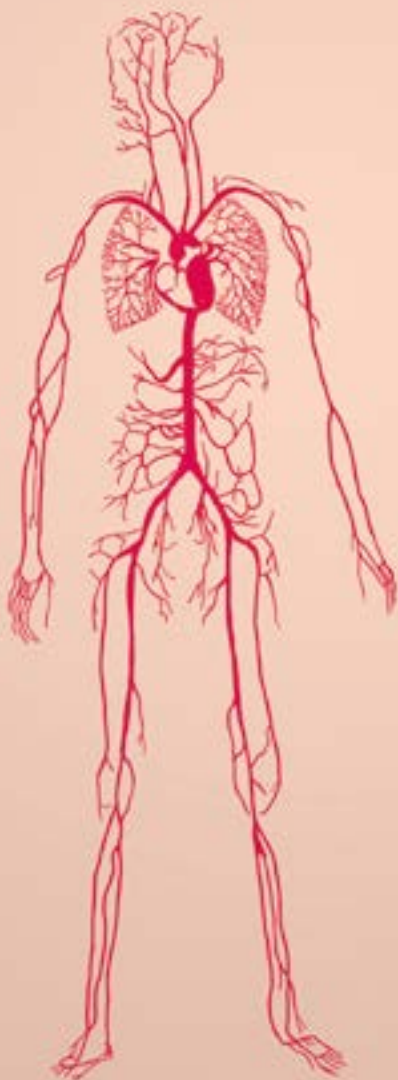
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Many indigenous people are in favour of development projects because they can generate jobs that are essential to the vitality of their communities. What they want, however, is to be consulted before developing projects on their ancestral territories, and they want a fair share of the benefits derived from the development of their lands. As the first inhabitants of the country, First Nations who have not signed a treaty have ancestral rights on these lands. Therefore, they should always be consulted on any future development project. The United Nations also calls on the State to obtain their consent, in advance, in a free and informed manner, in the event of the development of exploitation projects on their territories and resources.

**WHAT THEY WANT, HOWEVER,
IS TO BE CONSULTED BEFORE
DEVELOPING PROJECTS ON THEIR
ANCESTRAL TERRITORIES.**

At present, however, indigenous people are often presented with a fait accompli and benefit very little from the economic spin-offs of such projects. Indigenous people would also like their ideas to be taken into consideration in projects, as well as their skills, including knowledge of the territory and conservation of flora and fauna.

Like Quebec society, Indigenous peoples may have divergent positions on development projects; some people may be in favour and others may be against, particularly with respect to environmental or land conservation issues.



10

PREJUDICE

“YOU DON’T LOOK LIKE AN INDIGENOUS PERSON!”

HOLLYWOOD CINEMA, SPECIFICALLY, HAS HELPED TO SHAPE THE COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION AND REPRESENTATIONS OF A “TYPICAL” INDIGENOUS PERSON.

Hollywood cinema, specifically, has helped to shape the collective imagination and representations of a “typical” Indigenous person.⁶

It is a misconception that all Indigenous people have the same type of physical appearance. Indigenous people are often told “You don’t look indigenous” because they do not fit the stereotypical portrayal that people have of them. There is, however, a wide variety of physical traits among indigenous people. It is therefore possible to find some with blond hair and blue eyes, for example. In addition, Indigenous people should not be expected to wear their traditional clothing or symbols, which are usually reserved for ceremonies or pow-wows, daily.

IT IS WRONG TO BELIEVE THAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ALL HAVE THE SAME TYPE OF PHYSICAL APPEARANCE.

⁶ Reel Injun movie (2009), by Neil Diamond.
[Online] <https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/videos/reel-injun-trailer> (26 January 2021).
This film is no longer available for free.

RESOURCES

Videos and films about and by indigenous people:



- ♦ Wapikoni: wapikoni.ca/home
- ♦ National Film Board films by and about Indigenous people: nfb.ca/indigenous-cinema/

Indigenous people's cultures are alive and vibrant. For more information and to start discussions:



- ♦ To find out what indigenous people's lands you live on: native-land.ca
- ♦ Learn more about residential schools for indigenous people in this virtual exhibition: legacyofhope.ca/wherethechildren/
- ♦ Visit the First Nations Garden at the Montreal Botanical Garden: espacepourlavie.ca/en/first-nations-garden

We invite you to discover indigenous people's cultures and to engage in exchanges with those around you. You can, for example, visit cultural spaces and museums, discover events such as festivals or even the Quebec Pow-Wow route.

- ♦ Musée des Abénakis: museeabenakis.ca/en (between Sorel-Tracy and Nicolet)
- ♦ Musée huron-wendat: tourismewendake.ca/en (in Wendake)
- ♦ Musée amérindien de Mashteuiatsh: cultureilnu.ca (Innus from Lac St-Jean)
- ♦ Venue for the dissemination of indigenous people's arts, artists and cultures, Ashukan Cultural Space: facebook.com/AshukanMTL (Montreal)
- ♦ Micmac Interpretation Site of Gespeg: micmacgespeg.ca/en (near Gaspé)
- ♦ Maison de transmission de la culture innue SHAPUTUAN: tourismecote-nord.com/en/members/culture-autochtone/maison-de-transmission-de-la-culture-innue-musee-shaputuan (Sept-Îles)
- ♦ Maison de la culture innue – Ekuanitshit: maisoncultureinnue.com/en (Mingan)
- ♦ Institut culturel cri Aanischaaukamikw: escapellikeneverbefore.com/en/members/aanischaaukamikw-cree-cultural-institute/85/aboriginal-experience (James Bay)
- ♦ La maison amérindienne: maisonamerindienne.com (Mont St-Hilaire)

These museums include exhibitions dedicated to indigenous cultures:

- ♦ Wearing our identity exhibit – *The First Peoples collection*: musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/exhibitions/wearing-our-identity-the-first-peoples-collection
- ♦ 1701 Exhibit – *The great peace of Montreal* at Pointe à Callière: pacmusee.qc.ca/en/exhibitions/detail/1701-the-great-peace-of-montreal
- ♦ *This Is Our Story* Exhibit at the Musée de la civilisation à Québec: mcq.org/tr/exposition?id=26532
- ♦ First Peoples Hall at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau: historymuseum.ca/event/first-peoples-hall



Every year, there are events that present music, dance, creations, etc.:

IN MONTREAL – First Peoples Festival:
presenceautochtone.ca/en

IN WENDAKE – KWE! Meet with Indigenous Peoples:
kwequebec.com

- ♦ Innu Nikamu festival: innunikamu.ca
- ♦ The Ondinnok Theatre is the first indigenous people's theatre company. To find out about their creations and to attend: ondinnok.org/en/

Visit the **Tourisme Autochtone Québec** website to find out where and when the powwows and many other activities will be held:
tourismeautochtone.com

DEFINITIONS

Indigenous people

The term "indigenous people" refers to a diversity of nations and peoples rooted in the territories they have occupied for millennia. Their histories come together through the impact of colonization and the cultural or physical genocides perpetrated against them by colonizing states. In Canada, section 35 of the Constitution recognizes First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples as Indigenous people. The 11 nations of Quebec are: Abenakis/W8banaki, Anishinabeg/Anicinapek, Atikamekw Nehirowisiw, Eeyou/Eenou, Wendat, Innu/Innu, Inuit, Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk, Mi'gmaq/Mi'gmaq/Mi'kmaq, Mohawk-Kanien'kehá:ka, and Naskapi.⁷

Amerindian (obsolete)

Term formerly used to refer to First Nations.

Oka crisis

The Oka Crisis lasted 78 days (July 11 to September 26, 1990) and pitted Mohawk protesters against the Quebec Provincial Police and the Canadian Army. At the heart of the crisis: the proposed expansion of a 9-hole golf course and a real estate project on disputed land where a Mohawk cemetery is located.

Genocide

Genocide is committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.⁸

Indian

A name that has become a pejorative term for First Nations, but is still used as a legal term to refer to people with Indian status under the Indian Act still in force in Canada.

Inuk (Inuit)

Random Eskimo-speaking indigenous people whose communities have historical ties to the Arctic environment, including Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec (Nunavik) and Labrador in Canada.

Indian Act

This Act (formerly the Indian Enfranchisement Act) defines who is an Indian and what his rights are. Concretely, First Nations have lost the right to define who their members are, the right to political autonomy, the right to educate their children according to their own cultures and traditions, and the right to exercise their culture, including their celebrations and rituals. The Indian Act, passed in 1876, is an instrument that perpetuates racism and colonialism by keeping indigenous people with minor status within their own territory.

7 DestiNATIONS : Carrefour International des Arts et Cultures des Peuples Autochtones. *C'est vital. Portraits dynamiques de la production culturelle autochtone en milieu urbain au Québec*, 2016. [Online] http://www.desti-nations.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/DestiNATIONS-Cest_Vital-Rapport016.pdf (27 June 2018).

8 United Nations. *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1948*. [Online] <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CrimeOfGenocide.aspx> (2 February 2021).

Métis

Term used to describe communities of mixed European and indigenous people, mainly from Western Canada.

Assimilation policy

A policy of assimilation proper consists in using means, usually planned, to maintain in minority or eliminate certain groups. A policy of assimilation uses strong means of intervention such as prohibition, exclusion or social devaluation, and sometimes, in extreme cases, repression and genocide. Assimilation is a policy which involves the use of forceful means of intervention, such as prohibition, exclusion or social devaluation, and sometimes, in extreme cases, repression and genocide.⁹

The 1960s scoop

The large-scale removal of indigenous people in the 1960s from their homes, communities and families of origin, often without parental or band consent, and their subsequent adoption by mostly nonindigenous families in the United States and Canada. Between 11,000 and 20,000 children were abducted between 1960 and 1990, depending on the source.¹⁰

First Nations

Term used to refer to indigenous people in Canada other than Métis and Inuit. First Nations people are the original occupants of the territories that make up Canada today. They were the first indigenous people to have sustained contact with settlers.

Reconciliation

As presented by the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (2015: 3): “Reconciliation” is about establishing and maintaining a relationship of mutual respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in this country. This requires awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the wrongs that have been done, atonement of the causes and action to change behaviours....

Reserve

Under the Indian Act, an “Indian reserve” is land held by the Crown “for the use and benefit of Indian bands”. Although reserves may serve as homes for indigenous people, they are at the same time tangible representations of colonial authority.

Residential schools for indigenous people

A network of residential schools that existed between 1880 (some as early as 1830) and 1996. Approximately 150,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were removed from their families and communities and forcibly placed in these schools where they were forbidden to speak their language and practice their culture. In Quebec, there are approximately 13,000 children, many of whom have suffered physical and sexual abuse. Some have even died without the knowledge of their parents. The psychological consequences on the survivors are numerous and still present (distress, suicide, intoxication, loss of cultural identity, loss of language).

Ancestral Treaties

Indigenous treaties are constitutionally recognized agreements between the Crown and indigenous people. Most of these agreements involve exchanges in which indigenous people agree to share some of their interests in their traditional lands in return for various payments and promises. These treaties sometimes have a deeper meaning, particularly in the minds of indigenous people who see them as sacred covenants between nations. In their view, treaties define the relationship between those for whom Canada is their ancestral homeland and those whose family roots are in another country. Treaties, therefore, are the constitutional and moral basis for alliances between indigenous people and Canada.

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Do you want to raise awareness of indigenous people in your community?

Contact Mikana!

Mikana means path in the Anishnabe language. Mikana is an Indigenous non-profit organization whose mission is to work for social change by raising awareness about indigenous people in Canada. We offer workshops, conferences and awareness training in different settings.

Mikana: mikana.ca or info@mikana.ca

Facebook: facebook.com/ProjetMikana/ **Twitter:** @MikanaProject

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⁹ Leclerc, Jacques. *L'aménagement linguistique dans le monde*, 2019. [Online] <http://www.axl.cerfan.ulaval.ca/> (27 June 2018).

¹⁰ Niigaanwewidam and al. Sixties Scoop, 2020. [Online] <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/sixties-scoop> (2 February 2021).

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