



Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k

PRESS RELEASE

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MCK signs Declaration on Restoring Traditional Government and approves next phase of the KGOV Project Charter

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 20, Ohiari:ha/June 2024) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) Council of Chiefs (Kahnawa'kehró:non Ratitsénhaienhs) signed the *Declaration on Restoring Traditional Government and the Authority of the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy* at the duly convened Council Meeting of June 17, 2024, by consensus of all those present. The Kahnawa'kehró:non Ratitsénhaienhs also approved the Project Charter for the *Kahnawà:ke Governance Project (KGOV): Transition to Traditional Government Phase*.

On June 17, 1979, the MCK received a mandate from the community, unanimously supported by Council, to return to traditional government under the Great Law of Peace. In 1982, the MCK committed itself to transitioning to traditional government, and re-stated that goal in 2000.

KGOV recently completed community engagement process found that the majority of Kanien'keháka Kahnawa'kehró:non support restoring Traditional Government and that there is broad support for reconciliation of the community's traditional and elected political bodies to create a unified government. This report was presented to the Kahnawa'kehró:non Ratitsénhaienhs on June 5, 2024, who agreed to support its "*Pathway to Traditional Government*."

Thus, exactly 45 years after the original mandate was received by Chief and Council, the present Kahnawa'kehró:non Ratitsénhaienhs has recommitted their support for Traditional Government and recognized the authority of the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy.

Immediately following the signing of the Declaration, the Kahnawa'kehró:non Ratitsénhaienhs approved the next phase of the KGOV Charter: *Transition to Traditional Government Phase*.

"I am proud to have been a part of this process since even before I was elected to Council, learning about our community's history and listening to Kahnawa'kehró:non and their experiences from the past and present," said Ietsénhaienhs Jessica Lazare, Governance Portfolio Chief. "After understanding the history of Kahnawà:ke's relationship with the Indian Act system and learning from conversations that have occurred because of the Kahnawà:ke Governance Project, it was clear to the table that this is the direction we continue with. This declaration is a reiteration that we are still working towards that 1979 commitment, 45 years later."

"The unanimous approval of this Declaration by the Ratitsénhaienhs is historic. It is a significant step forward toward the achievement of our ancestral vision of restoring traditional government in Kahnawà:ke," said Gerald Taiaiake Alfred, KGOV Project Lead. "I see it as a bold act of decolonization. It represents true leadership by this Council, who acted in accordance with the wishes of the majority of Kahnawa'kehró:non, past and present."

To view the *Declaration on Restoring Traditional Government and the Authority of the Rotinonhsón:ni Confederacy* [click here](#). The Declaration and Mohawk Council Executive Directive can also be viewed at www.kgov.ca.