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Tsi Nahóten Karihwanákere No'nenk News Release

Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke Position on Canada's Endorsement of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

For immediate release

(Kahnawake – 17, Kentenhkó:wa/November 2010) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke today announced its position on Canada's long overdue endorsement of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*.

The MCK believes that Canada's actions in this matter are a cause of great concern. While many organizations – First Nations and otherwise – have offered congratulations and well-wishes, we feel that unconditional congratulations would not be a true reflection of our feelings in this matter.

The fact that Canada is the last country to approve the Declaration should not be lost upon First Nations people, the Canadian public and the world at large.

To us, endorsing the Declaration "in a manner fully consistent with Canada's Constitution and laws" is yet another manifestation of colonial arrogance. It is simply a way of saying that Canada is not legally obligated to abide by the Declaration.

It is now incumbent on Canada to prove to us that it is sincere in its position and is, in fact, willing to actively explore ways to implement the Declaration, even in instances where there are differences between our respective Constitutions.

Canada has a long history of imposing its will on those peoples originally living on what it considers is its current territory. As far as the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke are concerned, this half-hearted endorsement is just another imposition of its will. As a matter of fact, Canada should have used the term "acknowledgement" instead of "endorsement," because, in actuality, that is all it is.

While this can be looked upon as a positive step, we reserve the right to temper our enthusiasm until such time as we begin to witness Canada's actual implementation of the Declaration and to fully respect its original intent.

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