

# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

## News Release

JUNE 19, 2023

### Statement of Solidarity with Chiefs of Ontario re. Canada's Proposed Métis Nation of Ontario Self-Government Legislation

(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) Chiefs of Ontario and First Nations in what is now known as Ontario have rejected the Government of Canada's proposed Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Self-Government Recognition and Implementation legislation, expressing serious and legitimate concerns about the impact the legislation may have on the exercise of their inherent and constitutionally protected rights, as well as concerns regarding the legitimacy of certain communities the MNO claims to represent.

We understand that, to date, the Government of Canada has failed to engage with the Chiefs of Ontario and impacted First Nations in what is now known as Ontario on this issue for their consent, despite the *United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* which affirms the application of the *United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in Canadian law, requires the laws of Canada to be consistent with the UN Declaration, and affirms the UN Declaration as the framework for reconciliation. The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) stands in solidarity with the Chiefs of Ontario and those First Nations as they act to protect and defend their inherent, constitutional, and human rights, and exercise their laws, legal systems, systems of governance, and jurisdictions within their territories.

First Nations in what is now known as British Columbia (BC) take no issue with the Métis Nation, the Métis people, or their efforts to advance their rights within their historic Homeland, where we understand deep kinship ties and legal relationships exist between First Nations and Métis which regulate co-existence between their families and respective communities.

However, in places where such deep kinship ties and legal relationships between First Nations and Métis have never existed, such as in BC and what we understand to be the vast majority of Ontario, First Nations are the sole and proper title and rights holders. In those places, any attempt by Métis persons or representative bodies to ignore or undercut the laws, legal systems, systems of governance, jurisdictions and title of First Nations through colonial means, rather than seeking to establish relationships in a respectful and legitimate manner, must be rejected, denounced, and resisted.

Consistent with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, the FNLC calls upon the Government of Canada to consult and cooperate in good faith with First Nations in what is now known as Ontario in order to obtain their free, prior, and informed consent before adopting and implementing its proposed MNO Self-Government Recognition and Implementation legislation.



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