



British Columbia All Chiefs' Task Force Fact Sheet

Human Rights

Canada continues to refuse to sign the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN DRIP), making it one of three countries worldwide that have yet to adopt the instrument. Of those three countries, both the United States and New Zealand have agreed to review their position on the UN DRIP, while Canada has done nothing. This refusal to adopt the UN DRIP is a basic denial of human rights for First Nations and implies the acceptance of further human rights violations against First Nations.

- ✚ The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples promotes equality for Indigenous peoples and recognizes their basic and fundamental human rights, as a collective or as individuals. Article 1 clearly states: *"Indigenous people have the right to the full enjoyment, as a collective or as individuals, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law."* Adoption of the UN DRIP will reduce further lengthy and costly litigations and human rights complaints within Canada.
- ✚ The federal government has refused to address discrimination against First Nations children in the child welfare system and education.
 - First Nations Child and Family Services agencies receive, on average, 22% less funding than provincial agencies; the Auditor General criticized the program indicating that shortfalls in funding mean the federal government is not providing First Nations Child and Family Services agencies with adequate funding requirements to meet the number or the needs of children in state care. This matter is before the Canada Human Rights Tribunal.
 - Other core programs for First Nations children, such as education, have been capped at 2% a year, which does not keep pace with inflation or the growing First Nations population.
 - Currently, First Nations students receive \$2,000 less per child annually for educational support than students in provincial schools. In 2007, INAC identified a need for 69 new schools while another 95 schools needed major repairs. Approximately 40 First Nations communities do not have schools at all. INAC's current plan addresses only 27 of those sites, but the funding is on hold.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has accepted a human rights complaint submitted by a group of BC First Nations, the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group and will be hearing their argument in the Spring of 2010. The HTG has provided a very strong statement on the ineffectiveness and inadequacy of the BC Treaty process and Canada's judicial system to provide remedy for the protection of the Hul'qumi'num human rights to property and aboriginal title.