

# UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

On September 13, 2007, the United Nations adopted the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*<sup>1</sup>. It is a document that states that all Aboriginal people around the world have rights and that everyone must work to respect them. This declaration was necessary because most of the world's indigenous peoples have been victims of discrimination and injustice.

What does the declaration say?

Aboriginal people have the right...	Which means that...
<b>To self determination</b>	They make their own decisions about their political, economic, social and cultural development. They also have the right to participate in the decisions of the governments that concern them.
<b>Not to suffer the destruction of their culture</b>	They are not victims of violence because of their culture. Children are not forced to go to schools of another culture, as they were in residential schools. They have the right to develop their culture. They cannot be dispossessed of their territories or moved by force.
<b>Of belonging</b>	They have the right to belong to an indigenous nation without being discriminated against. Indigenous nations may occupy territories different from country borders.
<b>To develop their culture</b>	They protect and develop archeological and historical sites, the language, crafts, drawings, rites, techniques, the arts, shows and literature that represent them. If cultural property has been taken away from them, ways must be found to repair that damage.
<b>To education</b>	They have schools where they receive the same education as all other citizens, but also in their language and according to their culture.
<b>To media visibility</b>	They have the right to be well represented on television, in movies, in literature, on the Internet, etc. This means in a fair way and without stereotypes.
<b>To health</b>	They can use their traditional medicines but also be treated in hospitals without being discriminated against.
<b>To land</b>	They maintain and strengthen their connections with the land and use it according to their traditions. If their land was taken away from them, ways must be found to repair the damage.

1 Canada joined the declaration in 2010.