



APNQL
ASSEMBLÉE DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS
QUÉBEC-LABRADOR

PRESS RELEASE

HISTORICAL ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF FIRST NATIONS TO ANCESTRAL LANGUAGES

Saint-Sauveur, September 5, 2024 – During the second edition of the Forum on the Linguistic Rights of First Nations, held in the Manoir Saint-Sauveur on September 4 and 5, APNQL leaders assembled and endorsed a historic declaration on the rights to ancestral languages. This declaration lays the road by defining this power in the context of our right to self-determination. Ancestral languages are fundamental to our identities and must be maintained, acknowledged, and passed on. This is our responsibility; we must take action right now.

The legal traditions of the First Nations are alive and must be honoured. This affirmation movement has mobilized leaders with the overarching goal of preserving and revitalizing Indigenous languages in order to secure their transmission to future generations. Despite the existing limitations and obstacles in our connections with the Quebec government, we now have the ability to act differently in terms of our rights and ambitions.

“The adoption of this declaration by the APNQL Chiefs is a clear affirmation of identity that must be respected. It is framed within the scope of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Languages. We are fully committed to exercising our self-determination, including our jurisdiction and responsibilities for the preservation of our languages and cultures.” (Ghislain Picard)

“We are proud to be able to reclaim our rightful place in our territories while promoting our mother tongues as First Nations peoples. This is how we can practice our traditions, our values, and especially our worldviews to ensure the preservation of our ancestral languages. We boldly affirm our cultural identities.” (Sipi Flamand)

“We take our responsibilities and the power that comes with them to pave the way for what follows so that our communities and members have the tools, means, and resources necessary to ensure the preservation and vitality of ancestral languages.” (Sarah Cleary)

About the CRLA (Regional Committee on Ancestral Languages)

Created in 2020 by the APNQL, the CRLA supports the First Nations and collaborates with them to contribute to maintaining and revitalizing their ancestral languages. The Committee's mandates are to mobilize and inform the First Nations about the various issues affecting their languages and to support them in advocating for them. For more information, visit their website at www.languesancestrales.ca.

About the APNQL (Assembly of First Nations of Quebec-Labrador)

The Assembly of First Nations of Quebec-Labrador is a regional political organization that brings together the 43 chiefs of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador. For more information, visit their website at www.apnql.com.

SOURCE: Regional Committee on First Nations Languages.

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