

New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council

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The Honourable Justin Trudeau
Office of the Prime Minister
80, rue Wellington
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Subject: Federal-Provincial meeting on economic development, the environment, natural resource development, and reconciliation

The New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council represents the interests of Mi'kmaq, Wolastoqey, and Passamaquoddy peoples, status and non-status who live off reserve throughout the province of New Brunswick, since 1972.

We are affiliated with the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples who has the mandate to represent the off-reserve status and non-status Indians, Métis and Southern Inuit Aboriginal Peoples, and serves as the national voice for its provincial and territorial affiliate organizations.

The Supreme Court decision in Daniels of April 14, 2016 marked the culmination of a 17-year long legal battle between the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and the Government of Canada. The Daniels Decision clarifies that the Federal Government is legally accountable for Métis and Non-Status Indian interests.

- That Métis and Non-Status are “Indians” under section 91(24) of the Constitution.
- That the Federal Government owes a fiduciary duty to Métis and Non-Status Indians.
- That Métis and Non-Status Indians have a right to be consulted and negotiated with in good faith by the Federal Government on a collective basis through representatives of their choice in regard to the interest of Aboriginal Peoples.

Since this judgement, the government of Canada and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples entered into a signed agreement on December 5, 2018 (namely, the CONGRESS OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES – CANADA POLITICAL ACCORD). It is our understanding that through the signing of the Political Accord, the federal government acknowledges their responsibility to the off-reserve Métis, status and non-status Indians, and Southern Inuit Indigenous Peoples.

Through the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, we have learned that the federal government has organized a First Ministers meeting between federal-provincial ministers on March 12 – 13 2020. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss important issues facing Indigenous peoples today, economic development, the environment, and natural resource development and reconciliation with the Indigenous people and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and its provincial affiliates were not invited.

I believe that the fact that the Prime Minister is not inviting the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is discriminatory. It goes against to the signing of the Political Accord on December 5, 2018 between your government and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. The exclusion prevents the members of our organization from being represented and it also discriminates against our organization and members.

I, therefore, request that you, the Prime Minister, ensure that the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is invited to this table in order to represent our interests and aspirations at this meeting.

We hope that you will be able to respond to this request.



Barry LaBillois
President & Chief
New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council