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PRESS RELEASE

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Grand Chief Norton applauds Canada's new position on UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

For Immediate Release

(Kahnawake – 10, Onerahthkó:wa/May 2016) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke (MCK) announced today that it is pleased at Canada's changing its position from 'permanent objector' to the new and positive position of formally adopting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

"The fact that Canada announced today that it has reversed its position as a 'permanent objector' to the Declaration is of great significance," said Grand Chief Joseph Tokwiro Norton. "This is a far cry from Canada's original position and opens the door to real and positive change to our relationship."

"Indigenous Affairs & Northern Development Canada Minister Carolyn Bennett statement that Canada is, "fully supporting the Declaration without qualifications" shows that the Trudeau Liberals are willing to walk the talk," he continued. "History tells us to be very, very cautious and reserved, but we are hopeful that they will be true to their word are awaiting the next steps."

"If they are sincere, we will make ourselves available to offer any assistance in this most important matter," Grand Chief Norton added.

Canada's announcement was made at the U.N. in New York City, where Minister Bennett and Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould are attending the opening session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

"I'd like to acknowledge Kenneth Deer," Grand Chief Norton concluded. "He has worked tirelessly on the Declaration for many years. I'm certain that Canada's change of position brings him some satisfaction and a well-deserved sense of validation."

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