

Tłıchq Ndek'áowo



Tłıchq Government

## **NEWS RELEASE: Canada's Announcement to develop a new "Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework"**

**Behchokq, NT (February 21, 2018)**

Tłıchq Government applauds the government of Canada's announcement regarding the proposed Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework (the "Framework").

This Framework—the first of its kind to be developed in partnership and through deep consultation with Indigenous Peoples—charts a new approach to reconciliation and establishing relationships based on mutual recognition, respect, cooperation, and partnership. The proposed Framework represents an unparalleled opportunity for Indigenous peoples and Canada to build a relationship that rests on strong and enduring foundations for the future.

For the Tłıchq Government, our relationship with Canada has been shaped through the Tłıchq Agreement. The Tłıchq Agreement—our Treaty—sets out how our government and other governments will work together. It recognizes Tłıchq rights of self-government and the jurisdiction to make decisions by Tłıchq, for Tłıchq, about matters that affect our lives. Today, we as Tłıchq are in charge of our destiny. Our government, authority over our lands, rights, and jurisdiction are recognized for as long as the sun rises, the rivers flow, and we are not restricted from continuing our way of life, as Tłıchq.

The Tłıchq Agreement was the first time that the government of Canada and government of the Northwest Territories recognized in a Treaty in the North that an Indigenous People had a right to self-government that was protected under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. This was a foundational turning-point in Canada's relationship with Indigenous people. The Tłıchq Agreement is a shining example of the successes that can flow from having Indigenous self-government rights be recognized as the foundation of Indigenous Peoples relationship with Canada. Canada's acknowledgement of this success in its proposed Framework recognizes the achievements of this approach and is a rewarding recognition of our Agreement and accomplishments together.

Since this recognition, Tłıchq Government has consistently and steadily been working to implement and breathe life into some of the provisions of the Tłıchq Agreement that have not yet been fully realized. We have been discussing how to better support and advance our self-government activities to benefit Tłıchq Citizens as we take on exercising our rights and fulfilling our responsibilities under the Tłıchq Agreement in new and evolving ways. We have been engaging in collaborative fiscal discussions about how to better support and advance our self-government through new modern approaches.

Through these discussions we have already started the important work of building up our rights and jurisdiction, resting on the strong foundation of the recognition of our self-government rights in the Tłıchq Agreement and aligned with the spirit in which our Ancestors entered into Treaty 11. We

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are following the path set by Chief Jimmy Bruneau who said how Tłıchq are strong like two people: one person, walking in the trails of our Ancestors, guided by our stories and way of life, as our Elders have always done; and one person knowing everything that needed to engage as a partner with Canada, its governments and peoples.

Canada's proposed Framework that focuses on the Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights, including how Indigenous self-determination and the inherent right of self-government can be realized and implemented, has immense promise for this work. Canada's new Framework can provide a path for us to animate how we work together to interpret the Tłıchq Agreement, our Treaty, to bring its purpose to new heights. It holds the potential to be the next chapter of our relationship together, as we work to breathe life into and implement the full intent of the Tłıchq Agreement and all its provisions.

Tłıchq Government is committed to working together to advance our rights in a spirit of partnership, respect, and collaboration. We understand that the government of Canada will be undertaking engagement regarding the collaborative development of the Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework over the coming months.

Tłıchq Government looks forward to further engaging with the government of Canada as it gives life to this Framework and to working in partnership to create new legislation, policies and approaches that will guide our relationships for generations to come.

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