



CHIEFS COUNCIL

Your Excellency the Honourable Mary Simon
Governor General of Canada
Office of the Secretary to the Governor General
Rideau Hall
1 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A1

Wednesday June 21, 2023

RE: MATAWA CHIEFS COUNCIL REJECTION OF CANADA'S LEGISLATION BILL C-53 *Recognition of Certain Métis Governments in Alberta, Ontario and Saskatchewan and Métis Self-Government Act*

Dear Governor General Simon;

This letter is to formally state for the public record before the Crown in Right of Canada that the Matawa Chiefs Council reject the introduction of the legislation by your government titled BILL C-53 *Recognition of Certain Métis Governments in Alberta, Ontario and Saskatchewan and Métis Self-Government Act* late this afternoon in the House of Commons.

As the Crown of England marked the coronation of King Charles III – the Government of Canada is making a legislative strategic move to dilute and diminish the highest-level status of the historic Treaties across Canada, including the James Bay Treaty No. 9 (1905-06 and 1929-30). Only the past, present and future yet to be born descendants and beneficiaries of Treaty No. 9 are the Indigenous Land and Rights Holders since time immemorial. The signing of the Treaty No.9 Adhesion was the last historic Treaty signing in Canada and the events of the Treaty signing are within the living memory of our People.

The introduction of federal legislation to recognize the Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) is an intentional legislative strategy to undermine the Treaty-Crown relationship in Canada between First Nations and the Crown. The Royal Assent to which you will be advised to provide to this legislation – is a betrayal by your office to the Indigenous Treaty land and rights holding signatories in Canada from coast-to-coast-to-coast.

The intent and impacts of the Government of Canada and its Prime Minister and Crown Ministers with this sweeping rights-granting legislation is unconscionable and may in the future be compared to both the legislative apartheid incurred by our People under the *Indian Act* and the government developed and enacted policies of the Indian Residential School Era. Rights granted under this legislation and the enactment of the Metis Nation of Ontario Self-Government Agreement with Canada being granted to the undefined and unregulated Metis Nation of Ontario will be irreversible.

The Matawa Chiefs Council call for your immediate response to our letter on this proposed legislation. The road to reconciliation between First Nations and the Crown in Right of Canada requires your leadership as Governor General - the official representative of the Crown in Canada - to protect the rights and interests of the original People of this land and address the colonial-rooted Crown issues that continue to impact the quality of life of First Nations.





CHIEFS COUNCIL

Sincerely,
MATAWA CHIEFS' COUNCIL

Chief Dorothy Towedo
Aroland First Nation

Chief Ramona Sutherland
Constance Lake First Nation

Chief Solomon Atlookan
Eabametoong First Nation

Chief Sheri Taylor
Ginoogaming First Nation

Chief Judy Desmoulin
Long Lake #58 First Nation

Chief Bruce Achneepineskum
Marten Falls First Nation

Chief Christopher Moonias
Neskantaga First Nation

Ogamakan Michael Sugarhead
Nibinamik First Nation

Chief Cornelius Wabasse
Webeque First Nation

This letter is without prejudice to the positions Long Lake No. 58 First Nation takes, or may take on the issue of whether Long Lake No. 58 First Nation is a party to any Treaty.

cc: *Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, The Honourable Marc Miller
Minister of Indigenous Services, The Honourable Patty Hajdu
Chiefs of Ontario and First Nations and Tribal Councils of Ontario
National Chief RoseAnne Archibald and AFN Executive Committee*

Attachment: Matawa Chiefs Council Resolution 2022-17





CHIEFS COUNCIL

RESOLUTION of the Matawa Chiefs passed at the 34th Annual General Meeting in Webequie First Nation to be effective from and after 1:00 pm Eastern Standard Time on July 26, 2022.

RESOLUTION #17-28-07-2022

MATAWA MEMBER FIRST NATIONS REJECT METIS ASSERTIONS IN THE MATAWA HOMELANDS AND TERRITORIES

WHEREAS, the Government of Canada and Province of Ontario have adopted a pan-Indigenous approach to the rights of First Nations that are recognized and affirmed under the *Constitution Act*, 1982 Section 35, and;

WHEREAS, the Province of Ontario has enacted the *Metis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Act*, 2015, and;

WHEREAS, the Government of Canada has enacted the *Metis Government Recognition and Self-Government Agreement*, 2019 with the Metis Nation of Ontario, and;

WHEREAS, the Government of Canada and Province of Ontario are incorporating into their legislations, regulation and policy their obligatory and legally required recognition of the Metis Nation of Ontario, so;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matawa Chiefs Council and Matawa member First Nations reject any Metis assertions being made in the Matawa homelands and territories, and;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that it is the position of the Matawa Chiefs Council that there is no historic basis for the recognition of any Metis rights in the land now subject to James Bay Treaty No. 9 (1905-06 and 1929-30) and the Ontario portions of Treaty No. 5., and;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matawa Chiefs Council also further reject the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario's recognition of the Metis claims as an Indigenous People group as Constitutional equals to the First Nations people of the Matawa member First Nations, and;

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matawa Chiefs Council direct that the rejection of the assertion of any Metis rights in the Matawa homelands and territories will also apply to any legal strategies or challenges, and regional or national First Nations discussions related to the rights and interests of our People including the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, 2021.

MOVED BY: Ogamakan Michael Sugarhead, Nibinamik First Nation

SECONDED BY: Chief Bruce Achneepineskum, Marten Falls First Nation

OPPOSITION(S): None





CHIEFS COUNCIL

ABSTENTION(S): None

CARRIED: Consensus

Chief Executive Officer

