



## Assemblée des Premières Nations Québec-Labrador

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### PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Public Safety in First Nations Communities: Chief Ghislain Picard appears before the Viens Commission

*Wendake, September 14, 2018* – The Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL), Ghislain Picard, will appear once again before Commissioner Jacques Viens in the context of hearings of the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec this morning at 11:30 a.m. He will be addressing the current state of the fundamental issues surrounding the issue of public safety and police in First Nations communities.

It should be recalled that following the last intervention of Chief Picard on this subject, on March 22, Commissioner Viens issued a 3rd call to action stressing the urgency, for “governmental authorities” to make the adjustments required to ensure that First Nations police services are truly treated as essential services, just like any other police force in Quebec:

[https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers\\_clients/Communiqués/Press\\_release\\_call\\_to\\_action\\_March\\_23.pdf](https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers_clients/Communiqués/Press_release_call_to_action_March_23.pdf)

The AFNQL Chief will provide an update on the situation of police services in First Nations communities, including the situation of communities without police forces, as well as the particular and troubling situation surrounding the legalization of cannabis due to the lack of adequate and adapted training and funding, only a few weeks from the scheduled entry into force of the new legislation. Chief Picard will denounce the total lack of response, both from Canada and Quebec, to his repeated requests for the establishment of a joint tripartite table for the implementation of satisfactory, effective, sustainable and long-term solutions to ensure public safety on the territory of First Nations communities. As such, the AFNQL's demand is firm and insistent, regardless of which government is in place on October 1.

Chief Ghislain Picard will be accompanied by Lance Haymond, Chief of the Anishnabe community of Kebaowek. Their testimony will take place from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Centre des Congrès de Québec.

The testimony of the representatives of the AFNQL during the hearings of the Viens Commission will be livestreamed at: <https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/index.php?id=53>

**About the AFNQL**

The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador is the regional political body that brings together the 43 Chiefs of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador. Follow the AFNQL on Twitter @APNQL.

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