



Assemblée des Premières Nations Québec-Labrador

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

First Meeting of the AFNQL-Québec Political Table

Wendake, June 17, 2021 - The AFNQL-Quebec Political Table, established by mutual agreement between the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador and the Legault government, held a first working meeting today, devoted mainly to First Nations health and social services issues.

The main objective of the AFNQL-Quebec Political Table is to establish and maintain respectful and fruitful political relations between the First Nations governments and the Government of Quebec. In addition to health and social services, the agenda of the Table's work that the AFNQL and the Legault government have set will also address, soon, public safety and the inclusion of First Nations in the economic development of Quebec.

Several First Nations Chiefs and Councillors participated in the meeting today, along with Ghislain Picard, Chief of the AFNQL and co-chair of the Political Table. Mr. Ian Lafrenière, Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs and co-chair of the Table, was accompanied by Ministers Christian Dubé, Health and Social Services, and Lionel Carmant, responsible for Health and Social Services, as well as several other elected officials.

The AFNQL presented the Political Table with a series of issues related to health and social services, more specifically in terms of access to services and youth protection. These issues are directly related to the concerns expressed by the First Nations population. The commitments requested by the First Nations are aimed at the implementation of sustainable actions, notably concerted coordination, and management in crisis situations such as COVID-19 and its impacts on First Nations in Quebec, as well as the application of Jordan's Principle, the implementation of Joyce's Principle developed by the Atikamekw Nation following the tragic death of Joyce Echaquan, and the autonomy of First Nations governments in matters of youth protection. The Legault government was able to provide answers to the issues raised or to commit to doing so within the framework of the technical tables that will now support the work of the Political Table.

The AFNQL and the Legault government also discussed, and committed to continuing discussions on, the Political Framework that will guide not only the work of the AFNQL-Quebec Political Table, but the entire political relationship between the First Nations governments and the government of Quebec.

"The concrete work of the AFNQL-Québec Political Table is now well underway. I sincerely believe that the First Nations population, as well as the population of Quebec as a whole, are asking their respective elected officials to find lasting solutions, to create the essential rapprochement between us that they themselves want, and this, more and more. It is this desire for rapprochement that I hear around me, and we have the duty to succeed. Nothing easy, but nothing impossible", declared Ghislain Picard, Chief of the AFNQL, at the end of the meeting.

About the AFNQL

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

Source:

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