



**Assemblée des Premières Nations
Québec-Labrador**

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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**THE AFNQL DENOUNCES THE “NATIONALIST” DRIFT OF THE FEDERAL
ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN AND AFFIRMS ITS POLITICAL PROGRAM**

Wendake, September 14, 2021 –The political program of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL): Implementation of Indigenous Peoples’ right to self-determination and equality among nations, both essential conditions for reconciliation.

The AFNQL’s political program is not electoral in nature. It is permanent. It is included in all political positions made public on a regular basis by the AFNQL. It is supported by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The only link this program has with the current election campaign is to demand that political parties, both federal and provincial, stop standing in its way. Whatever the composition of the next Canadian parliament, parties will have to facilitate and support self-determination of Indigenous Peoples and recognize equality among all nations living on the territory. For its part, the government of Quebec must stop interfering with and obstructing federal jurisdiction in relation to Indigenous Peoples.

Whether it is due to the tragedies associated with attempts to assimilate Indigenous peoples, in particular, the tragic legacy of Indian residential schools, the unacceptable treatment of Indigenous women and girls, the tragic consequences of systemic discrimination experienced on a daily basis across the territory by Indigenous Peoples or, territorial conflicts that are never resolved, Canadian media turn to Indigenous issues often, for all of these negative reasons.

The facts are known, the population is aware, yet politicians remain hesitant and more so than ever, during this campaign. No solutions will come from them; the AFNQL is convinced of this as it has been repeatedly confirmed to us throughout history. We can expect nothing from these fearful politicians. Indigenous Peoples have rights and above all else, the right to exercise them. The AFNQL’s political program affirms this.

The AFNQL’s political program includes another element that is essential to reconciliation: equality among all nations occupying this territory. The current federal election campaign has taken a dangerous turn where a “nation” is assuming the right to impose its views and superiority over other nations. Let's be clear: the nations that share the land are equal to each other. None have the right to use the rules of Canadian parliamentarism to infringe upon the rights of other nations in the name of “nationalism”. Great nations were not built by violating the rights of other nations. It is no longer a matter of nationalism, but of colonialism.

No one can claim to include their rights in the Constitution Act while denying rights that are already included and recognized. This is what the current Quebec provincial government is doing, among other things, through its Bill 96, with a tacit approval from federal political parties on the campaign trail, all of which seem to favour their partisan interests. This is unacceptable. The AFNQL's political program has constantly objected to this and has made it clear to the current provincial government, which continues to ignore it.

“Whatever is said and done in Ottawa and Quebec, First Nations will always be free and capable of protecting their languages, their values and their powers,” said Ghislain Picard, Chief of the AFNQL.

About the AFNQL

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

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