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**Endorsement of UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Brings Canadians Closer to Reconciliation**

Canada has taken another step in improving the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians by signing onto the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), according to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC).

“Reconciliation at home can only be strengthened by the willingness to recognize the uniqueness of Indigenous peoples internationally,” said TRC Commissioner Chief Wilton Littlechild. “While we differ in many ways, the obstacles we face as Indigenous peoples are very similar around the world. I congratulate Canada for signing the declaration.”

On November 12, 2010, Canada officially announced that it would endorse the UNDRIP. The Declaration is a *non-legally binding aspirational document that describes both individual and collective rights of Indigenous peoples around the world. It addresses issues such as culture, identity, language, health and education and provides guidance to States, the United Nations, and other international organizations on harmonious, cooperative relationships with Indigenous peoples. It is based on the principles of equality, partnership, good faith and mutual respect.*

“By signing the UN Declaration, Canada is helping all people move forward from the history of oppression of Indigenous peoples – a history which is shared by all Canadians,” said Commission Chair Justice Murray Sinclair. “We first saw an apology for the atrocities of the Residential School system, closely followed by the mandate and creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Two positive steps in the right direction.”

The TRC was formed as a result of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. The Commission is gathering statements and documents relevant to the Residential School system, while raising awareness of this shared history through a series of national events, community events, research and commemoration initiatives.

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For more information, please contact:

Nancy Pine
Senior Communications and Outreach Advisor
613-947-9647
613-316-5654 cell
Nancy.pine@trc.ca

