



For Immediate Release

Self-determination should be on the table in Ottawa: Day

SERPENT RIVER FN (January 19, 2012) – Lake Huron Regional Chief Isadore Day says that self-determination and economic development need to be addressed at next week's Crown-First Nations gathering in Ottawa.

"Treaties in Canada must be honoured," says Day. "The spirit and intent of Treaties in Canada was about sharing in the wealth and bounty of traditional lands. Instead we see poverty and a failed Crown-First Nation relationship. Advancing federal, provincial, and private sector economic interests can no longer be done at the expense First Nations not being at the table.

"Self-determination and restoring Anishinabek Nation government must be the next jurisdictional frontier in a new relationship between First Nations and the Crown. A new social contract of First Nation self-government in this country means that Canada must recognize the formal advancement of First Nations as an existing level of government in the Canadian political fabric."

The Lake Huron Regional Chief noted that the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to which Canada is signatory, states that First Nations people have the right to self-determination.

"By virtue of that right," he adds, "they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."

Self-determination and honouring the treaties will be the focus of First Nations at the Crown-First Nations gathering in Ottawa on January 24th.

The Anishinabek Nation established the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 39 member communities across Ontario, representing approximately 55,000 people. The Union of Ontario Indians is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.

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