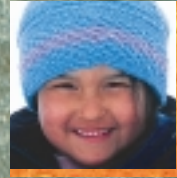


# The Amerindians and Inuit of Québec



# Eleven Contemporary Nations





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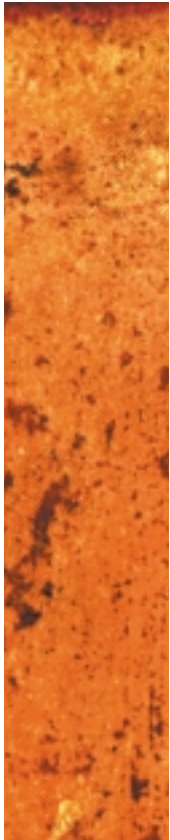
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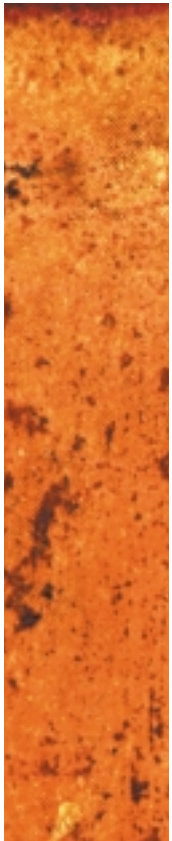
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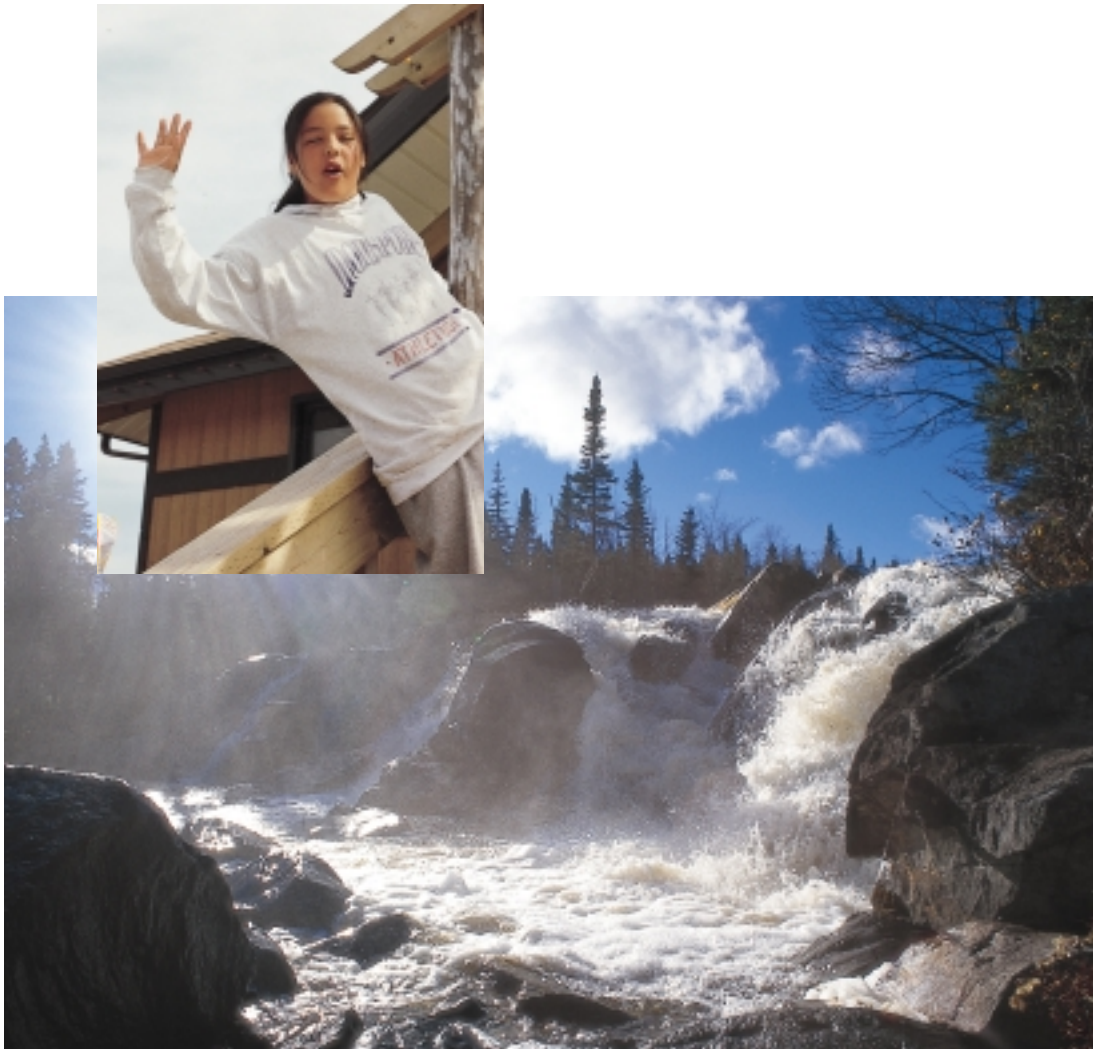
# INTRODUCTION

This booklet examines the current condition of Québec's aboriginal people, the progress made in their relations with other Quebecers and the initiatives taken by the Québec government regarding aboriginal affairs. It provides important information on and raises awareness of aboriginal issues.

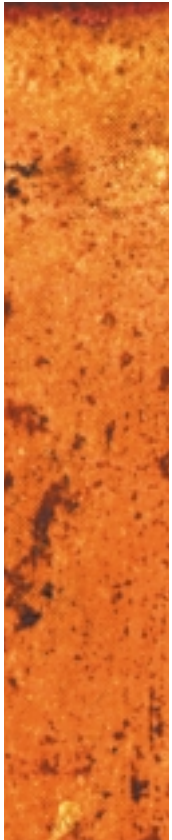


The booklet begins with an overview of the Québec government's role in aboriginal affairs. It then provides general information on the demography, social conditions, culture, economy, and political structure of Québec's aboriginal people. The booklet concludes with a description of the stages that have marked relations between the government and aboriginal people over the last 40 years.

Of course, this document does not claim to provide a complete picture of the current condition of the Amerindians and the Inuit, or to examine all the differences between the various aboriginal nations. More modestly, this booklet hopes to provide some perspective on the present-day realities of Québec's aboriginal people.



## A PROFILE OF TODAY'S ABORIGINAL PEOPLE



Who are Québec's aboriginal people? Where do they live and how many are there? What sets them apart culturally, economically and socially? What is their political life based on? What are the roles of the Canadian and Québec governments in aboriginal affairs? These questions have to be answered to obtain a realistic picture of aboriginal people.

"Aboriginal" is a generic term used to refer to the original nations of a country. In Québec, Amerindians, people of Amerindian ancestry, and Inuit are all considered to be aboriginal people.

It is important to distinguish Quebecers who were born here, but whose ancestors (European or otherwise) immigrated beginning in the 17th century, from the descendants of the first nations to arrive in America several thousand years earlier.

### Québec's role

It was not so long ago that programs for Amerindians were administered entirely by the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. However, band councils gradually began to take over responsibility for all sectors of activity in their community. Nonetheless, the ties formed between the federal government and Québec's Amerindians remain significant. Under the

Indian Act, the federal government has primary responsibility for Amerindians.

The Québec government has had a role to play among the Inuit of Québec in particular and with the entire Cree and Naskapi nations since the signing of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement in 1975 and the Northeastern Québec Agreement in 1978. It also works increasingly with all the aboriginal nations in various sectors of activity.

This role has intensified since the announcement, in the fall of 1998, of the government's guidelines for aboriginal affairs. These guidelines are given in a paper entitled *Partnership Development Achievements* and cover the eleven aboriginal nations in Québec. The Québec government intends to meet the challenges of improving relations between aboriginal people and Quebecers as a whole, reaching development agreements, improving self-government and financial self-sufficiency of aboriginal communities, as well as their social and economic conditions. Since these guidelines were released in 1998, Québec and abo-

original people have reached a large number of agreements.

Québec continues to deal with aboriginal people according to the 15 principles adopted by the government in 1983 and the resolution passed by the National Assembly in 1985, recognizing aboriginal rights.

### The Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones

The mission of the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones, which is part of the ministère du Conseil exécutif, is to promote harmonious relations with aboriginal people and foster their development.

While the federal government has centralized its dealings with aboriginal people in the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Québec has taken a different approach. Each Québec government department and organization exercises its authority in regard to aboriginal people in the same way it does in regard to the rest of the population. Most have an aboriginal affairs coordinator.





However, the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones coordinates government activities as a whole.

The Act to amend the Act respecting the ministère du Conseil exécutif, which became effective in January 2000, broadened the mandate of the Minister for Native Affairs, who is responsible for the Secrétariat. The latter, working with government departments and organizations concerned, also conducts comprehensive negotiations with aboriginal peoples. In addition, it implements all the agreements between the Québec government and aboriginal peoples.



Lastly, the Secrétariat supplies appropriate information to aboriginal people and to Quebecers in general.

### Who are aboriginal people?

According to the Indian Act, “an Indian is a person who is registered as an Indian in the Indian Register of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DINA) or who is entitled to be”. This definition is the basis for distinguishing between status Indians, non-status Indians and Inuit.

### Status Indians

A person is recognized as a status Indian if his or her name is listed in DINA's Indian Register. The everyday life of status Indians is affected by factors related to their status. Although the Indian Act confers certain rights, it also imposes obligations that can be constraining. A group of status Indians for whom land has been reserved and whose funds are held by the Crown forms an Indian band.

Income earned by Indians on the reserve is generally tax-exempt, and goods purchased on the reserve are non-taxable. However, as property on the reserve is non-seizable, except by another aboriginal person, it cannot be used as security for a loan. This situation can present significant problems, for instance, when it is necessary to borrow money to finance a business.

Income earned by status Indians outside of the reserve is usually subject to the same taxes as that of other Quebecers. Status Indians must also pay the same taxes as other Quebecers on all goods purchased outside of the reserve that are not delivered to the reserve. However, they are exempt from paying municipal property taxes and school taxes on trapping camps located on beaver reserves.

### Non-status Indians

For various reasons, even though they have Amerindian ancestry, non-status Indians are not listed in the Indian Register. In most cases, they are the descendants of women who lost their status as Indians because they married non-Indians. In Québec, non-status Indians are not referred to as Métis.

Since 1985, when Bill C-31 was passed, the Indian Act enables an Indian woman to recover her status if she lost it by marrying a non-Indian. This amendment allows her children to obtain their status as Indians as well.

### The Inuit

The Inuit are of different race and culture than the Amerindians. They are not subject to the Indian Act. The Inuit are subject to the same tax system as other Quebecers, and they do not have any special exemptions.

### The signatories of the agreements

After the signing of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement with the Crees and the Inuit in 1975, and the Northeastern Québec Agreement with the Naskapis in 1978, the Canadian government passed the Cree-Naskapi (of Québec) Act. For these two nations, this Act replaces the Indian Act, giving them a different legal framework. The Inuit, however, chose to be governed by Québec, rather than be subject to a federal statute.



### Population

The total population of the 10 Amerindian nations and the Inuit nation was approximately 77 850 in 2000, which represents 1% of the total population of Québec.

A few demographic features:

- The population of the nations ranges from about 700 in the case of the Malecite nation to over 15 500 in the case of the Mohawk nation.
- The population of aboriginal communities varies considerably from 150 to over 9 000 inhabitants.
- 25% of the communities have a population of less than 500 and 55% have fewer than 1 000 inhabitants.
- 50% of the aboriginal people in Québec - and 39 of the 55 communities - live in three regions: Nord-du-Québec, Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Côte-Nord.
- 81% of the Abenakis, 58% of the Hurons-Wendat and almost all the Malecites live off reserve.
- The Inuit population lives almost exclusively in 14 northern villages while 66% of Amerindians live on reserves.
- Inuit communities are generally small, with populations between 150 and 1 625.
- 50% of status Indians are under 30 years of age, compared with 39.5% for Canadians as a whole. Among status Indians, 8% are over 65 years of age, compared to 12.5% for Canada's population as a whole.

- Among the Inuit, 66.5% are under 30 and 3.4% are older than 65.
- The aboriginal population grew by close to 9 000 people as a result of changes made to the Indian Act in 1985.
- 10% of Canada's Amerindian population resides in Québec, 23% in Ontario and 16% in British Columbia.



## ABORIGINAL POPULATION IN QUÉBEC

Nation	Communities	Residents	Non-residents	Total
ABENAKIS	Odanak	308	1 466	1 774
	Wôlinak	64	147	211
		372	1 613	1 985
ALGONQUINS	Hunter's Point	12	225	237
	Kebaowek	234	390	624
	Kitcisakik	298	47	345
	Kitigan Zibi	1 436	1 001	2 437
	Lac-Rapide	447	129	576
	Lac-Simon	1 104	233	1 337
	Pikogan	527	243	770
	Timiskaming	536	975	1 511
	Winneway	335	299	634
	4 929	3 542	8 471	
ATTIKAMEKS	Manawan	1 685	246	1 931
	Obedjiwan	1 755	295	2 050
	Wemotaci	1 052	295	1 347
		4 492	836	5 328
CREES	Chisasibi	3 250	49	3 299
	Eastmain	564	14	578
	Mistissini	2 687	189	2 876
	Nemiscau	566	33	599
	Oujé-Bougoumou	569	86	655
	Waskaganish	1 704	340	2 044
	Waswanipi	1 210	346	1 556
	Wemindji	1 098	78	1 176
	Whapmagoostui	740	7	747
		12 388	1 142	13 530
	HURONS-WENDAT	Wendake	1 220	1 661
INNU (MONTAGNAIS)	Betsiamites	2 521	626	3 147
	Essipit	182	200	382
	La Romaine	861	52	913
	Mashteuiatsh	1 960	2 595	4 555
	Matimekosh-Lac-John	700	71	771
	Mingan	449	14	463
	Natashquan	759	60	819
	Pakuashipi	257	2	259
	Uashat-Maliotenam	2 600	583	3 183
		10 289	4 203	14 492
MALECITES	Cacouna and Whitworth	2	681	683
MICMACS	Gaspé	0	474	474
	Gesgapegiag	508	598	1 106
	Listuguj	1 911	1 115	3 026
		2 419	2 187	4 606

Nation	Communities	Residents	Non-residents	Total
MOHAWKS	Akwesasne (Québec section only)	4 658	69	4 727
	Kahnawake	7 140	1 748	8 888
	Kanesatake	1 321	622	1 943
		13 119	2 439	15 558
NASKAPIS	Kawawachikamach	734	53	787
STATUS INDIANS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH A NATION		1	118	119
TOTAL – AMERINDIAN POPULATION		49 965	18 475	68 440
INUIT	Akulivik	470	4	474
	Aupaluk	152	1	153
	Chisasibi (Inuit part)	96	13	109
	Inukjuak	1 187	60	1 247
	Ivujivik	273	6	279
	Kangiqsualujuaq	686	11	697
	Kangiqsujuaq	513	24	537
	Kangirsuk	427	27	454
	Kuujuaq	1 516	109	1 625
	Kuujuarapik	478	88	566
	Puvirnituq	1 252	69	1 321
	Quaqtaq	307	19	326
Salluit	971	64	1 035	
Tasiujaq	221	0	221	
Umijuq	328	25	353	
TOTAL – INUIT POPULATION		8 877	520	9 397
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>58 842</b>	<b>18 995</b>	<b>77 837</b>

Sources: Indian Register, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, December 31, 2000 and Registers of Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Beneficiaries under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement and the Northeastern Québec Agreement, ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec, April 5, 2001.



### Where do aboriginal people live?

The Amerindians of Québec live on reserves, settlements or lands governed by the agreements. However, they do not all live in communities, even if they are registered as members of a band. In Québec, almost 50 000 Amerindians live on reserves, settlements or lands governed by the agreements, whereas almost 18 500 live elsewhere. Most of the 9 400 Inuit live in northern villages along the shores of Hudson Bay and Strait, and Ungava Bay.

Reserves are tracts of lands that have been set aside for the use and benefit of Amerindians; settlements are lands inhabited by Indian bands, but never officially designated for their use. The federal government administers the territories constituted by the reserves; however, Inuit lands are subject to a distinct land regime entirely under Québec jurisdiction.

The northern agreements grant the Crees, Inuit and Naskapis specific rights over vast territories classified by category in order to facilitate their administration and to establish user rights. Category I lands are designated exclusively for aboriginal use; categories II and III are public lands, on which aboriginal people enjoy certain rights.

In Québec, reserve lands cover a total area of 14 786.5 km<sup>2</sup>. Category I lands under the agreements represent 95% of this area, and reserves and settlements, a mere 5%, even though they are home to 70% of aboriginal people living on reserved land.

THE AREA OF THE LANDS RESERVED FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE	
NATION	AREA (km <sup>2</sup> )
Not governed by the agreements	
Abenakis	6.8
Algonquins	208.0
Attikameks	49.8
Hurons-Wendat	1.1
Innu (Montagnais)	295.1
Malecites	1.7
Micmacs	41.4
Mohawks	142.5
Sub-total	746.4
Governed by the agreements	
Crees	5 551.7
Inuit	8 162.1
Naskapis	326.3
Sub-total	14 040.1
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>14 786.5</b>

Source: Ministère des Ressources naturelles, *Localization of the aboriginal nations in Québec, Land Transactions, 1998.*  
 \* Decimals have been rounded to one place for the purposes of this publication.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

The arrival of the Europeans on this continent unleashed a social upheaval among aboriginal people. Since 1940, the value systems and traditional ways of life of Amerindians and Inuit have undergone rapid and far-reaching changes.

Barely 60 years ago, the Inuit and a large number of Amerindians led nomadic lives. The Inuit roamed from one camp to another, living in igloos and makeshift shelters while they hunted fish and game to ensure their livelihood. The Amerindians would congregate at certain specific places in the summer and disperse in groups of two or three families over hundreds of kilometres of forest as soon as fall came. Their contacts with the other inhabitants of Québec were few and far between.

Nowadays, most aboriginal people spend the entire year in villages that have basic infrastructures and offer community services in the education and health and social services sectors.

### Health and social services

The health of aboriginal people in Québec has improved noticeably in recent decades, although there are still disparities with the rest of the people of Québec. Increased life expectancy and lowered rates of infectious diseases and infant mortality are indications of better physical health, but such problems as diabetes, infectious diseases, injuries and mental distress continue to cause concern.

Of the social ills encountered among aboriginal people, alcohol and drug abuse, family violence and crime constitute major challenges for many communities.

Aboriginal people are covered by the same legislation governing health and social services as other Quebecers. The universal hospital and medical insurance plans are the basis of health care both for them and for non-aboriginal Quebecers.

In addition, the federal government offers preventive services either directly or through the band council to all native communities, except those belonging to nations that have signed agreements. The latter, that is, the Crees, the Inuit and the Naskapis, receive the range of services offered by the Québec government through the aboriginal institutions created under the agreements. The Crees have a regional health and social services board that provides services through the Chisasibi hospital and dispensaries in each community, which offer much the same services as Québec's CLSCs (local community service centres). The Inuit have a regional board responsible for organizing the services offered by two hospitals, one for the Hudson Bay region and another for the Ungava Bay region, again supported by community dispensaries in each Inuit village.

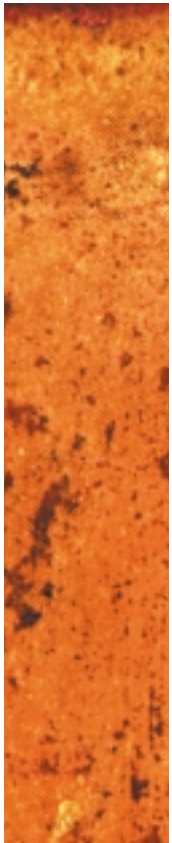
Finally, it should be emphasized that health services not insured under the Québec plans, such as dental care, optometry and prostheses, are provided free of charge by the federal government to status Indians not governed by the agreements. The Québec government provides most of these services free of charge to the Inuit, the Crees and the Naskapis.

Under a 1984 special agreement with the Québec government, the Mohawk people of Kahnawake have complete authority over the

administration and operation of the Kateri hospital. The operating costs are paid by Québec.

Most social services are provided by aboriginal organizations, working in conjunction with the Québec network for certain services related to the application of the Youth Protection Act and the Young Offenders Act. The nations governed by the agreements have their own child and youth protection centres and rehabilitation facilities for young people with adjustment problems. A few aboriginal communities prefer to go through Québec institutions to obtain the entire range of social services on their territory. In this case, the institutions hire native personnel in order to adapt their services to aboriginal culture and communities.

Some aboriginal organizations play a dominant role in improving the social conditions of aboriginal people. The Québec Native Women's Association (QNWA) is very active in promoting non-violence. The QNWA, whose head office is in Montréal, carries out such activities as information campaigns, symposiums and community initiatives.



The Assembly of First Nations of Québec and Labrador (AFNQL), the Québec government and the federal government cooperated in setting up the First Nations of Québec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission. In 1997, this body conducted a wide-ranging medical survey of aboriginal people in Québec. The survey was funded by Health Canada and was part of a Canada-wide initiative leading to report that was tabled in January 1999. The report contains information on many aspects of the physical and mental health of aboriginal people in Québec, and their way of life.

### Education

The education of aboriginal children in Québec comes under the jurisdiction of the federal government, in keeping with the Indian Act, with the exception of Cree, Inuit and Naskapi children, whose nations have signed special agreements with the Québec and federal governments.

Aboriginal children at the primary level usually attend their community school. Most of these schools also offer schooling at the secondary level. Where this is not available, the children are enrolled in schools in the Québec system.

Although a number of school programs are adapted to aboriginal culture and language, Québec's educational program is generally applied in aboriginal schools. Once run by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, these schools are now administered by band councils and funded by the federal government.

The movement by aboriginal peoples to take charge of education began in 1972, when the National Indian Brotherhood (Canada) published a statement of principle entitled

*Indian Control of Indian Education*. Among other things, this declaration called for an overhaul of the type of instruction afforded Amerindians and the introduction of a system of education that better reflected aboriginal needs and philosophies. The Brotherhood asked that band councils be partially or totally responsible for the teaching given on the reserves, the long-term objective being complete autonomy, along the lines of a provincial school board.

Accordingly, in 1978, the first community decided to take over education in its schools. This initiative, supported by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, prompted other communities to follow suit. Today, all communities but one are entirely responsible for teaching and administration in their schools, and for making the necessary agreements with school boards.

At the post-secondary level, aboriginal students attend schools in the Québec network, and the costs of their education are paid by

Québec. The CEGEPs of Sept-Îles, Joliette, Chicoutimi, Outaouais, Baie-Comeau, John-Abbott and Marie-Victorin, as well as the universities of Québec in Chicoutimi and in Rouyn-Noranda and Concordia and McGill universities, in Montréal, have set up structures and programs to accommodate the needs of aboriginal people.

Although they are eligible for the Québec loans and scholarships program, aboriginal students at the college or university level often apply for individual financial assistance from the federal government to pay for tuition, transportation and accommodation.

In accordance with the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, school boards have been set up for the Crees and the Inuit. The Cree School Board and the Kativik School Board are responsible for, among other things, primary and secondary education as well as continuing education. They can also reach agreements concerning college and university education.





As regards the Naskapi people, the Northeastern Québec Agreement provided for the creation of an education committee attached to an existing school board to administer the school at Kawawachikamach. The Naskapis chose the Central Québec School Board, which has its head office in Québec City. Primary and secondary education is provided at the Naskapi school.

Funding for education in Cree, Inuit and Naskapi villages is shared by the federal and provincial governments, in accordance with the two agreements.

Enormous progress has been made in the level of schooling of young aboriginal people over the past three decades. However, the gap is still too wide between the number of aboriginal people and the number of other Quebecers attending secondary schools, colleges and universities, for instance.

### Hunting, fishing and trapping

Québec's aboriginal nations do most of their hunting, fishing and trapping on public lands in Québec. These activities are usually governed by agreements, acts and policies under the responsibility of the federal and provincial governments.

Hunting of migratory birds and fishing come under federal jurisdiction. Ottawa has, among other things, adopted the Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences Regulations and an interim policy on the application of the Canada Wildlife Act respecting off-season hunting and egg-gathering by aboriginal people. These measures enable the latter to carry on their traditional hunting and fishing activities.

The Québec government established several beaver reserves beginning in 1928. Today, these reserves total 1 250 000 km<sup>2</sup>, of which

over 375 000 km<sup>2</sup> are located outside the lands governed by the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. On these territories, with the exception of the Saguenay reserve, aboriginal people have exclusive rights for hunting and trapping fur-bearing

animals. Furthermore, aboriginal persons who trap on beaver reserves and hold a licence issued free of charge by the Minister responsible for Wildlife and Parks can hunt and fish for subsistence purposes throughout the year.

The James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, the Northeastern Québec Agreement and the legislation to which they give rise allow the Crees, the Inuit and the Naskapis to hunt, fish and trap under a different regime than the one governing the rest of Québec. Moreover, assistance programs have been set up to promote the preservation and development of their hunting and trapping activities.

Hunting, fishing and trapping constitute a prime element in the negotiations being carried on with several aboriginal communities because these activities are closely linked to cultural survival and development, economic

expansion and cooperation in the management of wildlife resources.

### The legal system

The Québec court network serves all the aboriginal communities. Generally speaking, the composition, jurisdiction and operation of the courts are the same everywhere in Québec.

However, two regions are served by itinerant courts that travel to isolated aboriginal communities. One serves the Crees and the Inuit; the other serves the Naskapis and the Innu in the Schefferville and Basse-Côte-Nord regions. Hearings, when necessary, are translated into the vernacular. Civil, criminal and penal cases, as well as those under the jurisdiction of the Youth Division, are heard.

There are currently four courthouses in aboriginal communities, in Chisasibi, Kuujua-rapik, Puvirnituk and Kuujuaq. In the latter community, a Québec public prosecutor, a legal aid lawyer and a clerk are available on a permanent basis to serve the people of the community and neighbouring villages.



Because of the interest taken by aboriginal communities in playing a more active role in social control at the community level, the ministère de la Justice has participated, in recent years, in studying and developing mechanisms to assist aboriginal communities to gradually take on more responsibilities regarding the administration of justice. It wants to extend partnerships with various aboriginal communities interested in playing an active and complementary role in this field.

The proposed mechanisms make use of models for the appointment of aboriginal justices of the peace or the implementation of approaches fostering public participation in conflict resolution. In the latter case, committees could be formed of citizens responsible, in particular, for advising judges or justices of the peace, regarding sentencing, proposing measures for young or adult offenders to compensate the victim or community as part of a duly authorized program, or mediating in certain disputes.

Lastly, since 1979, the Native Para-judicial Services of Québec has been administered by a non-profit corporation whose board of directors includes representatives from all aboriginal communities. The organization has 18 paralegal advisers and is active in both urban and isolated communities. The chief role of the advisers is to inform aboriginal people of how the legal system works and help accused aboriginal people to understand the nature and consequences of the accusations, the decisions of the court, and their rights and responsibilities under various statutes. They also work to make participants in the criminal justice system aware of the social and cultural situation of aboriginal people. Lastly, they provide liaison between stakeholders and accused aboriginal people in the various steps of the legal process.

## Public security

Aboriginal communities are empowered to regulate a number of areas affecting public security, such as fire protection and highway traffic. The rapid growth of the aboriginal population has led to a demand for more public security services in the communities. Consequently, prevention and a community approach are matters of on-going concern.

Policing in aboriginal communities must be sensitive to the diversity of the communities and nations. Thus, for a number of years already, the Québec ministère de la Sécurité publique and the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada have each administered a program designed to set up police services in aboriginal communities.

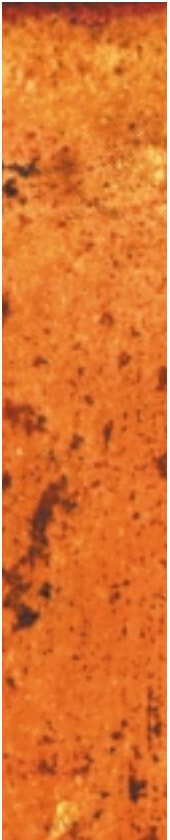
Fifty aboriginal communities in Québec provide police services and most of them have concluded agreements to that effect. While they administer these services themselves, the Sûreté du Québec or other organizations must at times provide police officers with support and back-up.

Québec is the only government in Canada to have amended its Police Act to allow for the creation of aboriginal police forces, giving Aboriginal police officers the same status as any other peace officer in Québec. To date, eleven communities have such police forces, namely Kitigan Zibi, Pikogan, Wendake, Betsiamites, Essipit, Mashteuiatsh, Uashat-Maliotenam, Listuguj, Akwesasne, Kahnawake and Kanesatake. In the other communities, special aboriginal constables appointed and sworn in under the Police Act provide police services. Aboriginal police officers are trained at the École nationale de police du Québec.

Aboriginal police officers in Québec do not have an easy job. They must often deal with the effects of a high unemployment rate in aboriginal communities, a high school dropout rate, and problems stemming from alcohol and drug abuse. Family violence and suicide are also matters of constant concern.

In spite of such difficulties, in 1999-2000, Québec had the lowest aboriginal incarceration rate in Canada, i.e. 1.3%, whereas aboriginal people make up 1% of Québec's population. Over the same period, the number of aboriginal offenders admitted to detention centres declined significantly, while correctional measures in open custody rose (suspended sentence, probation, community work, etc.).

## ABORIGINAL CULTURE



Québec's 11 aboriginal nations all have a variety of culturally distinct features. In this sense, we must speak, not of one, but of several aboriginal cultures. Aboriginal people are now reclaiming their ancestral cultures after having, in some cases, strayed from them.

Cultural expressions are imbued with traditional values that are still present, to varying degrees, in aboriginal nations. The natural environment, central to the spirituality and philosophy of traditional cultures, is comprehensively dealt with. Accordingly, nature is seen as Mother Earth while humans are but one component, like wildlife, plant life, etc.

Until quite recently, the improvement of social and economic conditions was at the centre of aboriginal demands in negotiations with governments. In recent years, cultural development has also become a priority.

There has been a return to aboriginal spirituality and traditional modes of thinking as a way of restructuring social and cultural patterns. Many aboriginal people are now convinced of the need to return to their cultural roots and values to ensure their survival and development as a distinct people.

The cultural heritage of Amerindians and Inuit is a blend of oral tradition, legend, folk medicine, songs and places reminiscent of ancestral deeds, sacred rites, and customs handed down by successive generations. In this respect, the elders embody a truly living heritage.

A much less well-known tradition, but one which has nevertheless been kept alive by aboriginal people, concerns the manufacture of utilitarian objects like moccasins, mittens, snowshoes, rifle sheaths, crooked knives, ice-picks and wooden shovels.

### Language

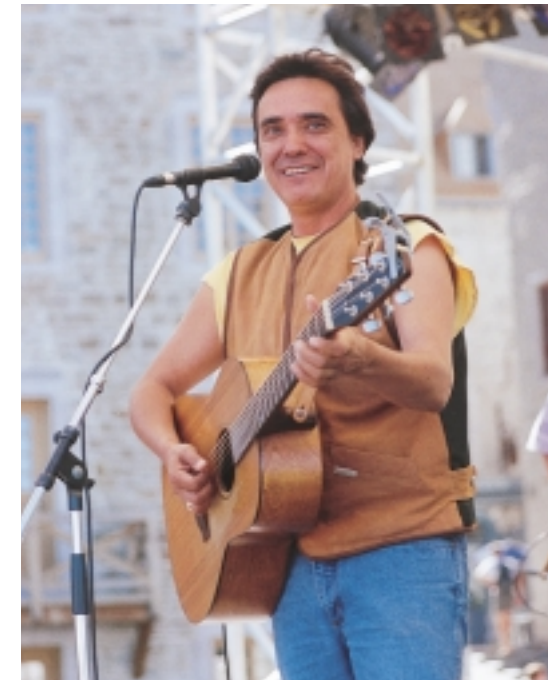
Amerindians and Inuit frequently express themselves in their own language, anywhere and in any circumstance. Of Québec's 11 aboriginal nations, eight have preserved their mother tongue. On the other hand, the proportion of people who are still able to speak that language depends on the community. One of the factors influencing the fate of aboriginal languages seems to be the remoteness of the community from large urban centres. Whereas the mother tongue is spoken by almost everyone in isolated communities, it is restricted to the elders in communities closer to such centres; in some cases, it has disappeared altogether.

The movement among aboriginal peoples to promote their cultural identity has given their languages a new lease on life. Several aboriginal nations have created structured cultural organizations with mandates to preserve and promote their language.

### Artistic expression

The artistic world of aboriginal people is bursting with energy. This is clear from the scope and quality of native achievements in the fields of sculpture, art, music, theatre and cinema.

Many aboriginal artists have earned an international reputation and perform in Québec as well as elsewhere in North America and Europe.





The arts and crafts industry, in which many women work, has undergone considerable change in recent years. It has become a thriving economic activity, complementing older artistic products like Inuit soapstone sculptures, which are now sold all over the world.

Some aboriginal nations have set up their own cultural institution, such as the Inuit Avataq Cultural Institute and the Institut culturel et éducatif montagnais (ICEM).

A number of aboriginal communities, such as Mashteuiatsh, Listuguj, Odanak, Wendake, Puvirnituq and Uashat-Maliothenam, boast their own museum.

### Communications

Oral tradition has always been the preferred vehicle of aboriginal culture. This doubtless explains why aboriginal people have opted for radio over print media and television.

Almost all aboriginal groups have their own community radio station. For over 20 years, Québec's ministère de la Culture et des Communications has fostered the development of these stations, in particular through a special support program. By broadcasting in the community's indigenous language, community radio stations contribute significantly to the survival of aboriginal languages.

There are three aboriginal communication networks in Québec: the Société de communication atikamekw-montagnaise (SOCAM), the Inuit Radio and Television corporation, Taqramiut Nipingat, and the James Bay Cree Communications Society.

There are a number of aboriginal print publications in Québec. The largest are the Inuit *Makivik Magazine* and four newspapers, namely the Innu *Innuvelle*, *The Nation* among

the Crees, and the Mohawk *Eastern Door* and *Indian Time*. Two magazines about aboriginal people are also published in Québec. *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* is published in Montréal by a group of anthropologists, while *Rencontre* is produced by the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones. Lastly, the periodical *Études Inuit/Inuit Studies* is published twice a year by the Inuksiutiit Katimajjiit Association, in collaboration with Université Laval's Groupe d'études inuit et circumpolaires (GÉTIC).

In addition, many aboriginal organizations have websites promoting culture, the economy, tourism as well as more political issues.



## ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT



Several factors and constraints influence the economic development of Québec's aboriginal communities. The majority of these communities are small and far from market centres; almost 30% are not linked to the highway system. In addition, since nearly 70% of the Amerindians on reserves do not hold secondary school diplomas, their access to vocational training is limited. Lack of skilled labour and difficulties obtaining financing are also factors that make it difficult to create stable well-paying jobs.

It should be pointed out that the communities closest to major urban centres have successfully developed their manufacturing and commercial sectors. For example, the Wendake Huron-Wendat community, the Kahnawake Mohawk community, and the Mashteuiatsh, Essipit and Uashat-Maliotenam Innu communities have spawned many businesses. Aboriginal people are emerging increasingly as leading economic partners in their regions and in Québec as a whole.

The First People's Business Association, formed in 1994, consists of aboriginal and non-aboriginal business people. Its mission is to promote and develop entrepreneurship among aboriginal people. Despite significant effort, aboriginal people are generally disadvantaged economically in comparison with the rest of Québec. The employment rate is substantially lower among aboriginal people than in the population as a whole, although the rate among Quebecers living in the same outlying regions is also lower than the provin-

cial average. Similarly, the average wage of Amerindians living on reserves is little more than half of what other Quebecers earn.

However, through the agreements, the Crees, Inuit and Naskapis have received substantial financial compensation, which has served to boost economic development. They have thus become solidly established in such sectors as air transport, construction, forestry and outfitting. Ready examples of their enterprise are Air Creebec, Cree Construction, Air Inuit and the Tuktu outfitting operation.

Furthermore, growth in aboriginal tourism has been remarkable in recent years. Many communities now boast lodging infrastructures and activities that showcase their way of life and culture.

Traditional activities like hunting, fishing and trapping are still carried on by many aboriginal people, sometimes to supplement a family's income but less and less as a major economic activity. They are part of a lifestyle but are no

longer the sole basis of the economy and employment. There are many reasons for this, in particular the decline of the fur market, the growth of the aboriginal population and broadening interests among the young. Nonetheless, one area related to wildlife management, namely the outfitting sector, is currently thriving in several communities and boosting local job creation.

Under the agreements, the Cree, the Inuit and the Naskapi nations benefit from a special program set up to provide support for traditional hunting, fishing and trapping activities.





## POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Until quite recently, notions like political party and level of government were absent from traditional Amerindian and Inuit political organization. Decisions were made by the community. Today, local authority belongs to the band council in Amerindian communities and to the municipal corporation among the Inuit.



The Indian Act allows communities either to elect band council members by universal suffrage or to choose them according to Amerindian custom. Band councils, which are made up of the chief and his councillors, play a political and administrative role. They can create committees and organizations to oversee the various aspects of community life. The band council is the key community representative in dealings with government. Its powers are broader than those of municipal councils in Québec. It is responsible for the delivery of all community services, including education, health, etc.

The northern village councils in Inuit communities are composed of a mayor and councillors elected by universal suffrage every two years. The northern village municipality assumes responsibilities normally delegated to municipalities, such as the administration of municipal services and public services; they can also regulate in these areas.

Some nations have set up organizations to defend and promote their interests. Some of the major aboriginal organizations in Québec are the Conseil de la nation atikamekw, the

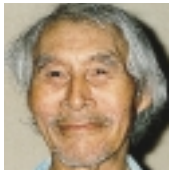
Innu Conseil tribal Mamuitun and Mamit Innuat, Makivik Corporation among the Inuit, the Grand Council of the Crees (Québec), the Algonquin Anishnabeg Nation Tribal Council and the Algonquin Nation Programs and Services Secretariat, the Abenaki Grand conseil de la nation Waban-Aki, the Conseil de la nation huronne-wendat, the Conseil de la nation malécite de Viger and the Micmac Mi'gmawei Mawiomi Secretariat.

At the pan-Canadian level, the Assembly of First Nations, which represents several nations, has branches in every province. The Assembly of First Nations of Québec and Labrador is the Québec branch.





## ABORIGINAL CLAIMS



While we often hear about the claims made by aboriginal peoples, are we truly aware of the nature of and reasons behind these claims? Although they touch on various points, they almost always seek to achieve three goals: greater autonomy, more land and the preservation of aboriginal identity and culture.

The federal policy on aboriginal claims distinguishes between comprehensive land claims and specific claims. There are also other claims that do not enter into either of these categories, as will be seen further on.

### Comprehensive land claims

Treaties were signed between the British Crown and the Amerindians of Canada long before Confederation. After the Canadian Confederation in 1867, the federal government continued this policy. It signed a series of treaties with aboriginal peoples in several provinces. These treaties dealt with land, education, pensions, hunting, etc.

As of 1920, jurisprudence recognized the existence of property rights for aboriginal people. In 1973, in the Calder case, the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed the existence of these rights. However, the courts did not define them.

The federal policy on aboriginal land claims was adopted in 1973. According to this policy, comprehensive land claims are those based

on traditional use and occupancy of the land. They generally concern a group of aboriginal bands or communities in a given region, and involve demands for the recognition of general rights, such as property rights, hunting, fishing and trapping rights, and other economic and social benefits. It is a question of replacing undefined property rights with precise rights defined in agreements.

Acting in part on the Constitution Act, 1982, which recognizes and confirms the existing ancestral or treaty rights of Canada's aboriginal peoples, the federal government adopted a revised policy on comprehensive land claims in 1986.

Since land and resources fall within provincial jurisdiction, the provinces were called upon to participate in negotiations. In Québec, only the Crees and the Inuit, in 1975, and the Naskapis, in 1978, signed agreements following negotiations on their comprehensive land claims. For a number of years now, the Attikameks and the Innu have been negotiating a similar claim. In 2000, a major step was taken in the negotiations with the Innu of the

Conseil tribal Mamuitun. The three parties agreed on a common approach that is now used as the basis for negotiation.

### Specific claims

The federal policy defines specific claims as those dealing with the administration of reserve land and other property of Indian bands, and with observance of treaties. These claims are generally negotiated with the federal government, since the provinces are rarely concerned.

### Self-government

Self-government is at the heart of the discussions between aboriginal peoples and governments. It was the main subject of four constitutional conferences of Canadian first ministers and aboriginal leaders held in Ottawa between 1983 and 1987. During these conferences, the aboriginal peoples failed to have the principle of an inherent right of self-government written into the Canadian Constitution.



Québec took a position in support of any constitutional amendment recognizing the right of self-government of aboriginal peoples, provided the necessary agreements were negotiated with the governments concerned.

In May 1991, the Commission on the Political and Constitutional Future of Québec (the Bélanger-Campeau Commission) received 10 briefs from aboriginal groups. They all demanded recognition of their right of self-determination, their ancestral and territorial rights, and their right to autonomy in the management of their affairs. The Commission stressed that Quebecers in general are eager to find grounds for agreement that would be satisfactory to both aboriginal people and the general public.

A few years later, in August 1995, the federal government adopted a policy to implement the inherent right of aboriginal peoples to self-government.

The Inuit formed the Nunavik Constitutional Committee in 1989 and submitted to the Québec government a project for regional government that was the subject of negotiations with the governments of Québec and Canada. In 1999, the three parties signed a political accord for the creation of the Nunavik Commission. The Commission was set up in November 1999 to make recommendations on a form of government for Nunavik. It concluded its work in March and released its report in April 2001. The signatory parties to the political accord will eventually undertake negotiations based, in whole or in part, on the recommendations found in the Commission's report.

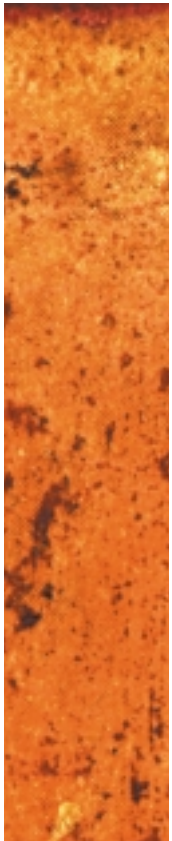
The Micmacs of Gespeg have also initiated negotiations on self-government with the governments of Québec and Canada. The three parties signed a framework agreement in May 1999.

### Other claims

Many other concerns have led to claims by aboriginal peoples, some of which involve economic, cultural and community development. Others involve health and social services, justice, energy, etc.



## MAJOR MILESTONES



Québec's relations with the aboriginal peoples are relatively recent and have moved forward significantly only since the 1960s. This is in large part owing to the Constitution Act, 1867 and the Indian Act, which made the Canadian government responsible for the Indians and the lands reserved for them.

Gradually, the federal government created services in education, health, social services, housing and so on. Prior to 1950, Indian affairs were successively the responsibility of a number of departments. In 1953, the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources was given responsibility for Indian affairs. In 1966, the Canadian government created the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

For one hundred years, relations between the Québec government and the aboriginal peoples were sporadic. Nevertheless, in 1925, Québec adopted a law enabling it to constitute a bank of public lands for the future use of the Amerindians. Three years later, in 1928, the Québec government created beaver reserves, territories where the Amerindians were given exclusive trapping rights.

### Significant steps

Many organizations and events have seen the light of day over the last 40 years, principally:

1963 – The Direction générale du Nouveau-Québec

By creating the Direction générale du Nouveau-Québec within the Department of Natural Resources, the Québec government renewed relations with the aboriginal peoples living on its territory. It began offering services to the Inuit and to a few Cree communities. Québec's first efforts were centred on education, and it immediately declared its intention to respect Inuit language and culture.

1969 - Brief submitted by the Québec Indian Association

This brief, submitted to the Québec government, dealt with the territorial rights of Indians.

1969 – The Government of Canada's White Paper on Indian policy

In this White Paper, the federal government announced its intention to abolish the Indian Act and proposed that provincial governments assume the same responsibilities toward Indians as they assume toward other citizens. These proposals were widely rejected by Amerindians and the federal government did not act on the White Paper, but the question of the role of the provinces vis-à-vis aboriginal peoples had been brought into sharp focus.

1969 - Right to vote in Québec

Amerindians obtained the right to vote in provincial elections. They had obtained the right to vote in federal elections in 1960.

1970 - La Commission de négociations des affaires indiennes

As a result of the discussions on the federal White Paper, the Québec government set up the Commission de négociations des affaires indiennes (CNAI). The mandate of this Commission demonstrates a desire to establish close ties with the aboriginal peoples. In its report, the Commission raised the problem of territorial integrity in relations between Québec and aboriginal people.

1971 - Dorion Commission

In the course of its mandate, the Commission d'étude sur l'intégrité du territoire du Québec (Dorion Commission) submitted a report on the territorial aspects of the Indian question and concluded that Indians have rights to parts of Québec's territory. The Commission thus confirmed that the territorial issue is at the heart of relations between aboriginal peoples and the government, and advocated a new framework for establishing relations, recommending that the Québec government be given jurisdiction over the Amerindians and Inuit on its territory.

1973 - Policy on land claims

The Canadian government adopted the first policy on comprehensive land claims by aboriginal peoples.

1973 - Calder and Malouf decisions

Two decisions, one by the Supreme Court of Canada (Calder) and the other by the Superior Court of Québec (Malouf), mark a turning point in the relations between Québec and aboriginal people. The first confirmed the existence of territorial rights for the aboriginal peoples of Canada. The second recognized the rights of the Crees and the Inuit on the territories Canada ceded to Québec under



the Québec Boundaries Extension Act of 1898 and 1912. The Malouf decision called for the suspension of work on the massive James Bay hydroelectric projects.

Following the Malouf decision, lengthy, intensive negotiations were begun, giving rise, in 1975, to the signing of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement with the Crees and Inuit.

#### 1975 – The James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement

This Agreement, the first modern large-scale agreement negotiated in Québec and in Canada, laid the foundations for the social, economic and administrative organization of a large part of the aboriginal population of Québec. It covers all aspects of the life of the Crees and the Inuit, who obtained 10 400 km<sup>2</sup> of land in the form of real estate. Québec also



recognized their exclusive hunting, fishing and trapping rights on Category II lands and their priority rights on all the land covered by the Agreement. The aboriginal signatories received \$225 million in compensation from the federal and provincial governments for the exchange of rights. The Bureau de coordination de l'Entente was created, in particular to draft the legislation required to implement the Agreement.

#### 1978 – The Northeastern Québec Agreement

This Agreement with Québec's Naskapi nation is largely based on the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. The Naskapi received full ownership of 285 km<sup>2</sup> of land and exclusive or priority rights to hunt, fish and trap on about 4 150 km<sup>2</sup>. The governments paid \$9 million in compensation for the exchange of rights.

#### 1978 – Creation of the Secrétariat des activités gouvernementales en milieu amérindien et inuit (SAGMAI)

A structure was set up to handle the entire aboriginal issue in Québec. SAGMAI replaced the Direction générale du Nouveau-Québec and the Bureau de coordination de l'Entente. SAGMAI, a coordinating agency within the Conseil exécutif, reporting directly to the Prime Minister, was responsible for drawing up government policy on aboriginal affairs. It also coordinated the activities of government agencies and departments that offer direct services to aboriginal people. This decentralized approach is an important factor in Québec's relations with aboriginal people.

#### 1978 – First summit meeting in Québec City

The first official meeting between the Québec government and the 40 band chiefs, along with 85 other aboriginal representatives, was held in Québec City from December 13 to 15, 1978.

#### 1982 – The Constitution Act, 1982

The Constitution Act, 1982 wrote the recognition and confirmation of the existing rights, whether ancestral or deriving from treaties, of the aboriginal peoples (Indians, Inuit, Métis) into the Canadian Constitution. This is a major change in Canada's legal system.

#### 1982 - Statement of principles

On November 30, 1982, the Québec Native People's Coalition presented a set of principles to the government.

#### 1983 - Adoption of the 15 principles

On February 9, 1983, the Québec government adopted 15 principles recognizing the aboriginal nations and the need to establish harmonious relations with them. These principles are as follows:

- 1) Québec recognizes that the aboriginal peoples of Québec constitute distinct nations, entitled to their own culture, language, traditions and customs, as well as having the right to determine, by themselves, the development of their own identity.
- 2) It also recognizes the right of aboriginal nations, within the framework of Québec legislation, to own and to control the lands that are attributed to them.
- 3) These rights are to be exercised by them as part of the Québec community and hence could not imply rights of sovereignty that could affect the territo-

- rial integrity of Québec.
- 4) The aboriginal nations may exercise, on the lands agreed upon between them and the government, hunting, fishing and trapping rights, the right to harvest fruit and game and to barter between themselves. Insofar as possible, their traditional occupations and needs are to be taken into account in designating these lands. The ways in which these rights may be exercised are to be defined in specific agreements concluded with each people.
  - 5) The aboriginal nations have the right to take part in the economic development of Québec. The government is also willing to recognize that they have the right to exploit to their own advantage, within the framework of existing legislation, the renewable and unrenovable resources of the lands allocated to them.
  - 6) The aboriginal nations have the right, within the framework of existing legislation, to govern themselves on the lands allocated to them.
  - 7) The aboriginal nations have the right to have and control, within the framework of agreements between them and the government, such institutions as may correspond to their needs in matters of culture, education, language, health and social services as well as economic development.
  - 8) The aboriginal nations are entitled within the framework of laws of general application and of agreements between them and the government, to benefit from public funds to encourage the pursuit of objectives they esteem to be fundamental.
  - 9) The rights recognized by Québec to the aboriginal peoples are also recognized to women and men alike.
  - 10) From Québec's point of view, the protection of existing rights also includes the rights arising from agreements between aboriginal peoples and Québec concluded within the framework of land claims settlement. Moreover, the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement and the Northeastern Québec Agreement are to be considered treaties with full effect.
  - 11) Québec is willing to consider that existing rights arising out of the Royal Proclamation of October 7, 1763, concerning aboriginal nations be explicitly recognized within the framework of Québec legislation.
  - 12) Québec is willing to consider, case by case, the recognition of treaties signed outside Canada or before Confederation, aboriginal title, as well as the rights of aboriginal nations that would result therefrom.
  - 13) The aboriginal nations of Québec, due to circumstances that are peculiar to them, may enjoy tax exemptions in accordance with terms agreed upon between them and the government.
  - 14) Were the Government to legislate on matters related to the fundamental rights of the aboriginal nations as recognized by Québec, it pledges to consult them through mechanisms to be determined between them and the Government.
  - 15) Once established, such mechanisms could be institutionalized so as to guarantee the participation of the aboriginal nations in discussions pertaining to their fundamental rights.

1983 - Parliamentary committee on aboriginal rights

For three days, 17 aboriginal groups presented briefs to the committee. It was the first time the aboriginal peoples had been invited to address the National Assembly of Québec.



### 1983 to 1987 - Constitutional conferences

Between 1983 and 1987, four constitutional conferences brought together the first ministers of Canada and representatives of the aboriginal peoples in order to spell out the aboriginal rights to be written into the Canadian Constitution. These conferences were a failure.

### 1985 - Resolution of the National Assembly

On March 20, 1985, the National Assembly of Québec adopted a motion recognizing the aboriginal nations and their rights in order to make official and publicize the major principles to be respected by the government in its relations with the aboriginal peoples. The National Assembly encouraged the government to conclude agreements with the aboriginal peoples in the following areas: self-government, culture, language, traditions, possession of and control over land, hunting, fishing, trapping, participation in the management of wildlife resources and participation in economic development. The resolution reads as follows:



### The National Assembly:

Recognizes the existence of the Abenaki, Algonquin, Attikamek, Cree, Huron, Micmac, Mohawk, Montagnais, Naskapi and Inuit nations in Québec;

Recognizes existing aboriginal rights and those set forth in the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement and the Northeastern Québec Agreement;

Considers these agreements and all future agreements and accords of the same nature to have the same value as treaties;

Subscribes to the process whereby the Government has committed itself with the aboriginal peoples to better identifying and defining their rights—a process which rests upon historical legitimacy and the importance for Québec society to establish harmonious relations with the native peoples, based on mutual trust and a respect for rights;

Urges the Government to pursue negotiations with the aboriginal nations based on, but not limited to, the fifteen principles it approved on February 9, 1983, subsequent to proposals submitted to it on November 30, 1982, and to conclude with willing nations, or any of their constituent communities, agreements guaranteeing them the exercise of:

- a) the right to self-government within Québec;
- b) the right to their own language, culture and traditions;
- c) the right to own and control land;
- d) the right to hunt, fish, trap, harvest and participate in wildlife management;
- e) the right to participate in, and benefit from, the economic development of Québec so as to develop as distinct nations having their own identity and exercising their rights within Québec;

Declares that the rights of aboriginal peoples apply equally to men and women;

Affirms its will to protect, in its fundamental laws, the rights included in the agreements concluded with the aboriginal nations of Québec; and

Agrees that a permanent parliamentary forum be established to enable the aboriginal peoples to express their rights, needs and aspirations.



1987 - The Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones SAGMAI became the Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones (SAA) with a mandate enlarged beyond its initial role with respect to the aboriginal peoples and government departments and agencies to include negotiations with the aboriginal peoples and the implementation of the agreements. It was also required to provide information to the general public and not only to the aboriginal peoples of Québec.

1989 – Recognition of the Malecite nation

On May 30, 1989, the National Assembly recognized the Malecites as the eleventh aboriginal nation in Québec.

1990 – The Sparrow case

The Supreme Court of Canada handed down a decision recognizing that subsistence fishing is an aboriginal right protected by the Constitution.

1990 – The Sioui case

In this decision, the Supreme Court of Canada recognized that a document signed in 1760 constitutes a treaty within the meaning of the Indian Act. This document, which concerns only the Huron-Wendat nation, does not precisely define the rights recognized or the territory to which the treaty applies.

1990 – The Oka crisis

A conflict breaks out between the Mohawk community of Kanesatake and the municipality of Oka concerning land that the municipality wants to develop that is claimed by the Mohawks. The situation degenerates into a crisis fuelled by prejudice on both sides, with disastrous consequences on relations between aboriginal people and the population of Québec.

1996 – Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples tabled a voluminous report on the situation of aboriginal people in Canada. One of its conclusions is that a fundamental change is needed in relations between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people.

1996 - The Adams and Côté decisions

The Supreme Court of Canada decided that the Mohawks of the Akwesasne reserve had an ancestral right to fish for food in Lake St. Francis and that the Algonquins of Kitigan Zibi had the same right in the Bras Coupé-Désert ZEC (controlled harvesting zone).

1997 – The Delgamuukw decision

In the Delgamuukw case, the Supreme Court of Canada defined aboriginal title for the first time since the Constitution Act, 1982 was passed. It also confirmed ancestral right specific to aboriginal title.

1998 – Government guidelines on aboriginal affairs

In a paper entitled *Partnership Development Achievement*, the Québec government released its guidelines regarding aboriginal affairs. The guidelines provide, among other things, for the creation of an aboriginal development fund, the reaching of agreements and the formation, in cooperation with aboriginal people, of a permanent political forum for discussion.

1999 – The Marshall case

In the Marshall case, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the Micmacs and the other aboriginal groups of Nova Scotia mentioned in the 1760 and 1761 treaties could fish year-round without a licence to obtain essential goods. However, the decision does not recognize a right to trade generally to earn financial gains and stipulates that this right is subject to regulation.



#### 1999 – The Nunavik Commission

Representatives of Nunavik and of the governments of Québec and Canada signed a political accord for the creation of the Nunavik Commission. The Commission's chief task is to make recommendations on a form of regional government for Nunavik.

#### 2000 – The Common Approach

The Conseil tribal Mamuitun and the governments of Québec and Canada agree on a common approach to be used as a framework for negotiating the comprehensive land claim settlement of the Innu communities of Betsiamites, Essipit and Mashteuiatsh. The community of Natashquan joined the negotiations in 2001.

#### 2001 – The report of the Nunavik Commission

The Nunavik Commission released its report entitled *Let us share, Mapping the Road Toward a Government for Nunavik*, at Makivik Corporation's annual meeting, April 5, 2001, in Kuujuarapik.

#### 2001 – Tricentennial of the Great Peace of Montréal

The Government of Québec was associated, as a major partner, in the celebrations commemorating one of the most important diplomatic events in the history of relations between the aboriginal peoples and New France: the signature of the Great Peace of Montréal in 1701.

#### 2001 – Agreement in principle with the Crees

On October 23, 2001, the Grand Council of the Crees and the Québec government signed an agreement in principle for better political, economic and social relations between the Crees and Québec. In particular, the agreement covers economic development of the Crees, forestry, and the Eastmain and Rupert hydro-electricity projects.

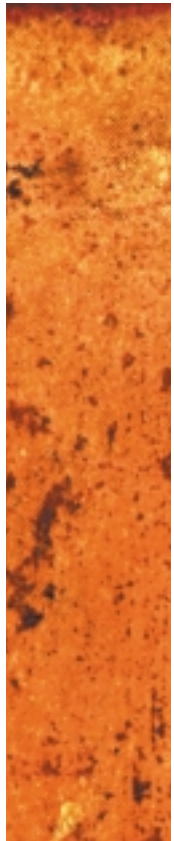


## CONCLUSION

This overview does not exhaust the aboriginal question. If it throws a little more light on the complex situation of the Amerindians and Inuit of Québec, a major objective will have been reached.

While it must be admitted that the gap between aboriginal people and other Quebecers is still wide, the fact remains that significant bases for a rapprochement have been laid over the past few years. This is illustrated by a number of examples: joint management of the Grande-Cascapédia river by the Micmacs of Gesgapegiag and non-aboriginal people, sawmills operated by the Attikameks of Obedjiwan and Donohue Corporation, and by the Crees of Waswanipi and Domtar Inc. Farther north, two mining companies have set up a business partnership with the Inuit and the Crees to develop the Kattinik (Raglan) and Troilus mine sites.

Lastly, with the adoption of the government guidelines on aboriginal affairs, major issues have been determined, particularly at the social and economic levels. In three years, the new government approach has led to the signature of ten framework agreements and declarations of understanding and mutual respect, about fifty agreement renewals in the fields of public security, wildlife, justice, health, culture and education, and some twenty specific agreements on economic and community development with 43 aboriginal communities.





## Photos

### Page couverture

An Inuit girl.

© *Tourisme Québec, Heiko Wittenborn*

An Amerindian at the Aboriginal Interband Games in Mashteuiatsh.

*SAA, Gilles Chaumel*

Young people of Kangiqsualujjuaq at the foot of an inukshuk.

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An Algonquin from Kitcisakik.

*SAA, Louise Séguin*

Véronique Mark, an Innu from Pakuashipi, on the Basse-Côte-Nord.

*Guy de Sénailhac*

Délima Niquay, an Attikamek, and her daughter.

*SAA, Gilles Chaumel*

### Page 1

A Cree from Oujé-Bougoumou.

*Harry Bosum*

### Page 3

A Cree from Oujé-Bougoumou.

*Harry Bosum*

A Cree from Oujé-Bougoumou.

*SAA, Louise Séguin*

The Papinachois resort, near the Innu village of Betsiamites.

### Page 5

An Amerindian woman participating in the festivities of the Great Peace of Montréal 1701-2001.

*Pierre-Sarto Blanchard*

The Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones takes part in regional fairs with aboriginal people, for instance at Baie-Comeau, with Innu artist Jean-Luc Hervieux.

*SAA, Lucie Dumas*

### Page 6

Cree children at a childhood centre.

*MFE, Louis L'Écuyer*

### Page 7

Some of the members of the Algonquin Thusky family: top row, Véronique, her mother Blanche, her sister Lucie and her niece Jennifer Wabamoose; middle row, her niece Juliette Chief and her daughter Rachel; bottom row, Philippe Nottaway, her nephew, with his girlfriend Marguerite Ratt.

*SAA, Gilles Chaumel*

An Inuit from Nunavik.

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### Page 11

An Attikamek from Obedjiwan.

*SAA, Gilles Chaumel*

Algonquins from Kitigan Zibi.

*SAA, Louise Séguin*

### Page 12

Young Algonquins from Timiskaming listen to the teachings of Julie Mowatt and Anna Mowatt, an elder.

*SAA, Louise Séguin*

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The Crown Prosecutor, Éric Morin, Sergeant Renaud Ringuette, responsible for the Sûreté du Québec station in Schefferville, Moïse and Tommy Vollant, respectively chief constable and constable of Matimekosh-Lac-John at a hearing of the Itinerant Court in Schefferville.

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A young Inuit from Inukjuak.

*Gilles H. Picard*

The Innu singer Florent Vollant.

*SAA, Ann Picard*

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A view of Kuujjuaq.

*Joseph-Marc Laforest*

An Attikamek host of the Manawan community radio station.

*SAA, Gilles Chaumel*

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An Algonquin from Lac-Simon.

*Alex Cheezo*

The Attikamek Wemogaz service station in Wemotaci.

*SAA, Daniel Larocque*

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Evelyn O'Bomsawin, an Abenaki woman from Odanak and former president of the Québec Native Women's Association

*SAA, Gilles Chaumel*

The Betsiamites band council.

*SAA, Ann Picard*

Chief Allison Metallic and the members of the Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation Council at the signing of a framework agreement with the Minister for Native Affairs, Guy Chevette, in June 2001.

*SAA, Ann Picard*

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An Inuit from Puvirnituk.

*Marc-Adélar Tremblay*

Press conference announcing the Common Approach, July 6, 2000: Michèle Rouleau, presenter, Guy Chevette, Minister for Native Affairs, chiefs René Simon from Betsiamites, Clifford Moar from Mashteuiatsh and Denis Ross from Essipit, and Pierre Pettigrew, federal Minister of International Trade.

*SAA, Ann Picard*

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The Nunavik Commission held extensive public consultations in the 14 northern villages, including Tasiujaq.

*Marc-Adélar Tremblay*

The Commission exchanged views with secondary students in each community visited.

*Makivik Corporation, Stephen Hendrie*

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An Algonquin woman from Lac-Simon.

*Alex Cheezo*

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The LG-2 spillway.

*Hydro-Québec*

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The parliamentary committee on aboriginal rights in November 1983.

*SAA, Marc Lajoie*

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Cree workers at the Nabakatuk sawmill in Waswanipi.

*Serge Gosselin*

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Cree Grand Chief Ted Moses and Prime Minister Bernard Landry at the signing of the agreement in principle on October 23, 2001.

*Clément Allard*

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Young Algonquins from Lac-Simon at the parade of the First Peace Ambassadors of the Great Peace of Montréal, June 21, 2001.

*Corporation des fêtes de la Grande Paix de Montréal 1701-2001, René Fortin*

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A young girl from Lac-Rapide.

*SAA, Gilles Chaumel*

The Tree of Peace, formed of sculptures created by students from Montréal for the exhibition *Living Words: Aboriginal Diplomats of the 18th Century*, presented by the McCord Museum of Canadian History in the summer of 2001.

*McCord Museum of Canadian History, Montréal, Marilyn Aitken*

Forty totem poles for peace were installed at the entrance to the Montréal Botanical Garden during the summer of 2001.

*SAA, Ann Picard*