



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMC stands with the Wolastoqey Nation and all First Nations in ensuring respectful and accurate land acknowledgement protocol

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) issues this statement in support of the Wolastoqey Nation position demanding a respectful and accurate land acknowledgement protocol in New Brunswick and across the traditional maritime homelands and waters of the Wolastoqey, Mi'gmaq and Peskotomuhkati peoples.

In a directive issued through memo by the attorney general of New Brunswick last week, provincial government employees were directed, for legal reasons related to an ongoing First Nations' claim in the region, not to use of the words, 'unceded' and 'unsurrendered' in any customary land acknowledgements in which they may be involved. Manitoba is currently developing a land acknowledgement statement for official use. The AMC will strongly oppose any similar limiting wording or phrasing in the proposed land acknowledgement for Manitoba, that does not capture the full spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.

Grand Chief Dumas said, "this directive in New Brunswick is another example of the ongoing colonialism that has often defined the relationship between First Nations and provincial and territorial governments not only in New Brunswick but in other provinces and territories as well. In Manitoba, the land and waters are also 'unceded' and 'unsurrendered': First Nations signatories to the numbered Treaties never ceded or surrendered anything, least of all their sacred lands and waters that sustained and nourished the ancestors for eons. We agreed in the spirit of peace and friendship to share the lands, waters and resources for the mutual benefit of the settlers and the First Nations across what are now known as the central and western provinces and territories of Canada. Similar to our east coast relatives, our Elders and Knowledge Keepers across our Treaty territories find it preposterous and absurd that the ancestors would agree to this type of 'cede and surrender' arrangement."

Grand Chief Arlen Dumas added, "the AMC offers its strong support to the Wolastoqey peoples in their stand against the New Brunswick government's directive. This directive is not only disrespectful to the First Nations in New Brunswick, it's inaccurate and not consistent with the spirit and intent nor with the interpretation of the Peace and Friendship Treaties. First Nations in Manitoba share the same conceptual understanding of Treaty-making with our east coast relatives, that is, that there was never any agreement to cede or surrender. The AMC will continue to ensure that these principles are recognized and respected in any land acknowledgement protocol for Manitoba," concluded Grand Chief Arlen Dumas.

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About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Inineu (Cree), Anishinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.