



ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA CHIEFS DECLARATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

We declare, that we, as First Nations governments, have had our Aboriginal (First Nation) title, aboriginal (First Nation) rights and Treaty rights recognize in both international law and the Constitution of Canada;

We declare, that we support the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which states that we have the collective right to live in freedom, peace and security as distinct Peoples and shall not be subjected to any act of genocide or any other act of violence including forcibly removing our children or group to another group;

We declare, that the principle of free, prior and informed consent must be the fundamental principle for any State actions that may impact any and all of our rights;

We, as First Nations governments in Manitoba, recognize that the short life of Jordan River Anderson has left a legacy that advocates for the rights of all First Nations children to be entitled to and receive adequate and appropriate services and supports for a quality of life enjoyed by all other children in Canada. Jordan's Principle is a Child First principle which applies to all government services available to children, youth and their families;

We recognize that, to date, no region or province in Canada has fully implemented the Child First principle. Regions where the provincial/territorial and federal government have announced intentions to act, have demonstrated their own definition of Jordan's Principle that is narrow in scope, exclusive to children who meet government-defined criteria rather than meeting the needs of children first, which disregards the fullest intent and meaning of Jordan's Principle – the Child First Principle;

We, the First Nations governments in Manitoba, declare that:

- The implementation of Jordan's Principle must be demonstrated by action that meets the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual needs of the child at the point of which such a need is identified, and that the Crown government, or department in first contact with the child to deliver and pay for services and supports without delay or disruption, and work out reimbursement later.
- All sovereign power and authority within the territories of the First Nations of Manitoba declare the right and responsibility to protect the First Nations children in Manitoba and uphold their rights consistent with the sacred teachings of the Denesuline, Anishinabe, Ininew, Oji-Cree, and Dakota Nations, as well as United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of Canada. The obligation to meet the needs of the child first must always supersede government interests to establish jurisdictional dispute processes or policy implementation policies.
- We will not allow any legislative authority to enforce inequitable and unjust policies, legislation, and/or practice that will diminish the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being of our children. First Nations in Manitoba must be adequately represented, as determined in the collective capacity of the 63 Chiefs of Manitoba, and engaged in meaningful participation in all aspects of planning, development, decision-making, and implementation of Jordan's Principle as declared by the First Nations in Manitoba.

We call upon the Crown Governments of Canada and Manitoba to ensure that action is taken this year to fully, and without equivocation, implement in spirit, intent, and practice Jordan's Principle, in his homeland of Manitoba, and across Canada.

DECLARED on January 19, 2011, at the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, General Assembly in Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Manitoba.