

**Speaking Notes for  
National Chief Kevin Daniels**

**Meeting of First Ministers and  
National Aboriginal Leaders**

**111 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario January 15, 2009**

Good Evening Prime Minister Harper, Premiers, Ministers and Deputy Ministers.

I am pleased to participate in this important meeting and wish to express my thanks for the opportunity to enter the discussion on practical ways in which governments and Aboriginal peoples can work together to deal with the economic crisis.

I am confident that in the spirit of cooperation, we can address the economic challenges we are all facing.

The problems are enormous and bold action is required. We all recognize that the economic turmoil we are facing is unlike anything we have seen since World War II.

Historically, Aboriginal unemployment rates have always been two to three times higher than for the mainstream. So we can expect that in 2009, unemployment rates for Aboriginal people will rise much faster than the average. CAP is highly concerned about the effect of this turmoil on Aboriginal peoples, especially on urban Aboriginal peoples. The blunt fact is that the largest numbers of Aboriginal peoples live in urban centres.

CAP fully supports accelerating infrastructure funding and investments including the urgent infrastructure needs for Aboriginal peoples.

There are tremendous opportunities to promote and enhance Aboriginal participation in the economy. Key to achieving practical results is enhancing the capacity of CAP's affiliates to facilitate and promote community and economic development through a network of economic development officers.

We support increased skills training to help Aboriginal people keep pace with the rapidly changing economy. CAP is recommending that the current levels of funding for the AHRDA program be increased over the next two fiscal years in order to deal with the expected influx of new clients. We are also calling for a doubling of the summer student placement program.

In the months ahead, we need to work on promoting economic opportunities, developing human resources, and providing financial help to Aboriginal business.

We want to ensure that the federal Aboriginal job creation package is fully inclusive of off-reserve and Métis peoples.

We are looking to provincial and territorial governments to establish an engagement process that will ensure a strong presence for off-reserve Aboriginal peoples in infrastructure initiatives.

We need your commitment to ensure that Status and non-Status Indians living off-reserve and Métis will be involved in provincial stimulus initiatives.

Development of flexible, integrated, community based solutions will have a significant impact on the national economy.

Welal'in – Meegwetch – Merci – Thank you –