

## **Media Release**

### **Congress of Aboriginal Peoples Files International Legal Action Against Government of Canada**

#### **Legal Petition Launched to United Nations Human Rights Committee**

September 9, 2021 – Ottawa, ON- Today, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) filed a formal legal petition to the United Nations Human Rights Committee against the current Canadian federal government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The formal legal complaint filed this morning with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, outlines the Canadian government's discrimination against Canada's off-reserve Status and non-Status, Métis, and Inuit Indigenous peoples based on their indigeneity. The legal filing clearly makes the case that the Canadian government's discrimination is based on the inaccurate and stereotypical assumption that Canada's off-reserve Indigenous peoples are less Indigenous than their reserve-based counterparts, and that federal government programs and policy fails to meet their needs.

At the core of the UN legal action is the fact that the Trudeau government denies rights to CAP and its constituents, Canada's off-reserve Indigenous peoples. This was done by failing to involve them adequately, or at all, in consultation or negotiations about self-government, land claims, healthcare, education, infrastructure, or natural resources.

"Canada, under the Trudeau government, calls this discrimination "a distinctions-based approach" towards Indigenous policy-making. This has been in place since approximately 2016. As part of this policy, Canada has chosen only to engage in consultation and negotiation with three "recognized" groups, none of whom represent the interests or voices of all off-reserve Indigenous peoples. In particular, Canada has failed to engage with or meet the needs of its urban Indigenous people," stated CAP National Chief Elmer St. Pierre.

National Vice-Chief Kim Beaudin added, "Indigenous people in Canada still face widespread discrimination and racism in justice, and health care. All this stems from a lack of recognition that should have followed the Supreme Court ruling on the CAP-Daniels legal battle. Prime Minister Trudeau has allowed a discriminatory approach to off-reserve Indigenous peoples that is wrong and is badly hurting grassroots indigenous peoples."

A large majority of Canada's Indigenous people, and a majority of status Indians, live off-reserve. Off-reserve Status and non-Status Indians, Métis and Inuit peoples have faced a history of disadvantage and neglect in Canada. CAP's national leadership was united in the decision to force legal action at the United Nations Human Right's Committee.

The complete legal filing can be accessed [here](#).

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#### ***For media interviews please contact:***

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The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is the national voice representing the interests of Métis, status and non-status Indians, and Southern Inuit Indigenous People living off-reserve. Today, over 70% of Indigenous people live off-reserve.