

9-11-10 Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting of the Canadian Religious Society of Friends fully endorses the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 September, 2007. We do not agree with the vote of the Canadian government, one of only four countries which voted against the Declaration. We note with appreciation that Australia has subsequently reversed its negative position. We call upon the Canadian Government to follow Australia's lead. This would support the will of the majority of our Members of Parliament, given that the Canadian House of Commons approved the endorsement and implementation of the Declaration on 8 April 2008.

We respectfully request the federal government endorse the Declaration. We call on all provincial and municipal governments in Canada to urge the federal government to endorse and implement the Declaration. We also remind all levels of government that they should abide by the Declaration's terms and spirit in all dealings and interactions with Indigenous Peoples even if the federal government takes no supportive action. International Human Rights instruments are accepted as universal once adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

We ask the Clerks of Victoria Friends Meeting and Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting as well as appropriate members of Duncan Worship Group and Mid-Island Allowed Meeting to contact the appropriate persons in British Columbia, encouraging municipal and provincial leaders to make their voices heard in requesting that our federal government support the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in keeping with the democratic process upheld by our House of Commons.

We suggest that contacts by letter, phone, email, or in person could include the information given in Minutes #70 from Canadian Yearly Meeting. Further we recommend that all our worshipping groups avail themselves of the opportunity to learn more about indigenous peoples (especially on Vancouver Island) in order to support or work in partnership with them on their issues.
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