

March 31, 2021

New Brunswick Monthly Meeting
The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
22 Hollybrook St., Fredericton, NB E3A 4N7

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

The New Brunswick Quakers feel compelled to draw your attention to an important piece of outstanding business of the current Parliament, Bill C-15, the Act to Implement the *United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP).

During the last parliament, Romeo Saganash's private member's bill C-262 aimed to achieve essentially the same purposes as C-15. However, it failed to be approved by the Government of Canada, even after having been approved by a vote of 206 to 79 in the House of Commons. Mr. Saganash's bill was blocked by unelected Senators in 2019, even though it had been scrutinized and positively received by large numbers of Canadians and Indigenous peoples. Prime Minister, your party campaigned on a promise to re-introduce this legislation, and we congratulate you for having done so. Now we ask you to please follow through and see this legislative project to completion.

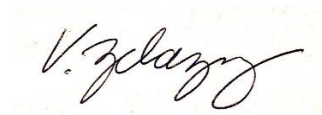
We were pleased to learn that government sponsorship of C-15 means there are ways that the government can prevent the bill meeting the fate in the Senate of C-262. We therefore ask that you seize the opportunity to prioritize Bill C-15 to be dealt with in the current Parliament before any election call.

As a religious society we feel moved by the admonition of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its Call to Action #48, which called on churches "to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms, and standards of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a framework for reconciliation."

Once Bill C-15 is adopted into law, we ask that your government further commit to good-faith engagement with a broadly-based representation of Indigenous peoples' elected and traditional leadership to develop the implementation plan.

We pray for transformation of the relationship between governments in Canada and Indigenous peoples from one fraught with injustice and haunted by systemic racism and colonialism to one more fully animated by respect, friendship, human rights, and concern for the welfare of others. We believe C-15 charts the path that will allow for such meaningful reconciliation and transformation.

In friendship,



Vincent Zelazny, Clerk

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