



# Canada's Aboriginal Peoples' Inherent Rights

# Canada's Indigenous People

- ↓ All the Aboriginal peoples in Canada include the First Nations, Métis and Inuit and they are **indigenous to Canada** otherwise known as the original inhabitants
- ↓ Indigenous peoples differ from immigrants who move from one territory to another to make a new home – immigrants may return to their homeland to relearn or reclaim their language, but indigenous peoples are already home and if their language and cultures disappear there is no where they can return to, to recover it.
- ↓ They view all aboriginal rights as **collective ones** which mean they belong to the group which is in contrast to individual rights which is a Western European way of looking at our rights and need for protection.

# Inherent Rights

- ⇓ Aboriginals view their rights as **inherent rights**.
  - Inherent rights can not be taken away, transferred or surrendered. Inherent rights cannot be given but can be recognized by a government. These rights are sometimes called inalienable rights.
  
- ⇓ Aboriginal leaders often stress that their nations have the **inherent right to sovereignty or independence** and have had this right from **time immemorial**.
  - The right was never lost, although the ability to exercise the right may have been.
  
- ⇓ **Desiring sovereignty does not mean desiring separation**.
  - Most Aboriginal leaders want to prevent the federal government from imposing rules upon or interfering in Aboriginal ways of life but do not want to separate from Canada.

# Self Determination

- ↓ Some Aboriginal leaders prefer the term **Self Determination** because it sounds less controversial
- Self Determination allows control over education, cultural preservation, economic development, and government.
  - Self Determination is the right of a nation to determine its own future
  - Some frame this demand as the desire for **Self Government** or the right for a community to make decisions about matters internal to the community.

# A DECLARATION OF FIRST NATIONS

- ↓ We the Original Peoples of this land know the Creator put us here.
- ↓ The Creator gave us laws that govern all our relationships to live in harmony with nature and mankind.
- ↓ The Laws of the Creator defined our rights and responsibilities.
- ↓ The Creator gave us our spiritual beliefs, our languages, our culture, and a place on Mother Earth which provided us with all our needs.
- ↓ We have maintained our Freedom, our Languages, and our Traditions from time immemorial.
- ↓ We continue to exercise the rights and fulfill the responsibilities and obligations given to us by the Creator for the land upon which we were placed.
- ↓ The Creator has given us the right to govern ourselves and the right to self-determination.
- ↓ The rights and responsibilities given to us by the creator cannot be altered or taken away by any other Nation.



**The Assembly of First Nations~**

