

Statement of Understanding and Mutual Respect

*A*kwesasne and Québec recognize the importance of developing a constructive relationship on the basis of their respective principles and concepts found in the *Kaswentha (Two Rwo Wampum)* and the document entitled "Partnership, Development, Achievement". They therefore agree to the following declaration of reciprocal political commitment.

Akwesasne and Québec, according to their respective principles, agree to govern their relationship on the basis of peace, friendship and respect and favour the route of discussion and negotiation for concluding and signing agreements that will be negotiated in various fields of jurisdiction.

With a strong sense of their respective culture, language, custom, laws and traditions, Akwesasne and Québec agree to negotiate with mutual respect for their national identities and each other's history and territorial occupation. In that regard, the Mohawks of Akwesasne consider that the relationship between the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and the "Traditional People of the Kahníakehaka Nation Council" and the manner in which they address their respective responsibilities are matters internal to Akwesasne.

Akwesasne and Québec acknowledge the need to co-operate as partners on some of Akwesasne's economic and social development initiatives. Québec recognizes the need to support Akwesasne's long term economic growth and social stability and agree to develop in cooperation with Akwesasne fiscal and financial arrangements to achieve this goal.

To accelerate the negotiation process and bring it to a rapid conclusion, Québec and Akwesasne each have appointed a negotiator with a view to the rapid conclusion of a protocol agreement and specific agreements in the various fields of mutual interest.

Akwesasne's participation in negotiations with Québec are not intended to replace, eliminate or restrict their participation in other negotiation processes or to conclude other arrangements with other parties nor shall it prevent Akwesasne's on-going exercise of its powers in various fields of jurisdiction.

Nothing in this Statement of Understanding and Mutual Respect prevents Akwesasne from continuing to exercise its prerogatives to enter into negotiations or to conclude agreements with any other government, person or organization.

Signed at _____ this _____ day of _____ 2000.

*Michael Kamenakeron Mitchell
Grand Chief
Mohawk Council of Akwesasne*

*Guy Chevrette
Ministre délégué
aux Affaires autochtones*

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