



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DETERMINATION INTERIM REPORT RELEASED

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) has released an interim report following an Indigenous-led summit held in Ottawa last week to explore moving beyond the Indian Act.

"It is clear that the only way to redress the harms done through the imposition of colonial top-down structures through the *Indian Act* is to empower communities to chart their own self-determined futures. To achieve this, there must be support for Indigenous communities to develop their own vision for what lies beyond the Indian Act," said Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. "We hope this report will be used as a roadmap by the Government of Canada and we look forward to moving forward on these recommendations."

Organized by NAN in partnership with Osgoode Hall Law School, the determiNATION Summit heard from Indigenous leaders, youth, women, Elders, legal and scholarly experts, and keepers of traditional Indigenous knowledge.

"Throughout our shared relationships and history with the settlers and their society we have been to this crossroads many times before. Assimilation and modified integration have never been our choice, they have been the choice of Canada for the last 150 years," said former National Chief Ovide Mercredi. "The belief in nationhood in our homelands has always been, and remains, our first and lasting choice. The Indian Act can't survive as a tool for defining the meaning of Nation-to-Nation."

The report includes several recommendations, calling for the Government of Canada to:

- clarify its commitment to repeal the Indian Act and to replace it with a legal and constitutional framework based on a Nation-to-Nation relationship and the principles set out in United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- support the development of Indigenous laws and practices in areas now imposed through the Indian Act; and
- establish a Community Empowerment Fund to support an Indigenous-led, community-driven process for dismantling the Indian Act and replacing it with a Nation-to-Nation reconciliation framework.

The report is available at determinationsummit.ca.

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