



DEHCHO FIRST NATIONS

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For immediate release

DEHCHO LEADER CONGRATULATES NWT LEGISLATURE FOR SUPPORT OF UN RESOLUTION ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES RIGHTS

FORT SIMPSON, NT – Feb. 26 – The interim Grand Chief of Dehcho First Nations (DFN). Gerald Antoine, issued a statement today congratulating MLAs for their unanimous support last week of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Following is the text of his statement:

“I would like to congratulate the Members of the Legislative Assembly for taking the step last week of recognizing and supporting the UN General Assembly’s declaration.

“The Declaration was the result of work done by Indigenous Peoples over a 27-year period to have their rights recognized by the United Nations. The Declaration sets an important standard for the international community which would not have been possible without the input of Indigenous Peoples.

“The Declaration is a vital instrument in advancing the rights of Indigenous Peoples in all areas of their lives from land rights to the issue of free, prior and informed consent.

“Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. did not support the resolution. The many arguments that Canada raised in opposition to the Declaration did not convince the overwhelming number of member states. Canada found itself in the unfortunate position of voting against a human rights standard.”

For the complete text of the UN Declaration please see www.un.org and for the motion approved by the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly go to Hansard (Feb. 19, 2006, unedited) at www.gov.nt.ca .