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*Committee adopts Bloc Québécois motion on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

## **“IT IS NOW UP TO THE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT TO RESPECT THE WISHES OF PARLIAMENTARIANS”**

- Marc Lemay

Ottawa, Thursday, June 8, 2006 –The Bloc Québécois critic for Indian and Northern Affairs and Member for d’Abitibi–Témiscamingue, **Marc Lemay**, today expressed pleasure at the passing by the Standing Committee on Indian and Northern Affairs of the Bloc Québécois motion recommending that the Harper government vote in favour of the draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Member pointed out that it is now up to the government to respect the wishes of democratically elected parliamentarians and to approve the Declaration at the next session of the Human Rights Committee.

Opposition party members on the Committee all supported the Bloc Québécois motion on Wednesday, which read as follows:

*“That, pursuant to Standing Order 108 (2), the Committee recommend that the government vote in favour of the draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the next working session of the Human Rights Committee.*

*That the Committee adopt these recommendations as a report to the House and that the Chair table this report in the House.*

For their part, the Conservative Party members decided to abstain from the vote.

“Bloc Québécois MPs have always worked with Aboriginal community representatives and I think the quick adoption of this motion clearly demonstrates the ties that have been forged and the effectiveness of this relationship. The result of this vote also demonstrates the Bloc Québécois’s determination to do more for the First Nations,” stated **Marc Lemay**.

“The Bloc Québécois fully supports Aboriginal peoples’ right to self-government. We consider it essential that Canada send a strong message recognizing Aboriginal peoples as distinct, each entitled to their culture, language, customs and traditions, not to mention their right to govern the development of their own identity. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is consistent with this position. Canada must support the Declaration,” concluded **Marc Lemay**.

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