

DRAFT

September, 1984

CHARTER
NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL COUNCIL
OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

I. PURPOSES

Section I - Purposes

This Council has been formed in order to ensure solidarity among the Indigenous Peoples of the First Nations of North America, to strengthen the government and organizations of the Indigenous Peoples in that region, and to facilitate the exchange of information among them. The Regional Council is dedicated to: abolishing the possibility of the use of physical and cultural genocide and ethnocide; combating racism; ensuring political, economic and social justice to Indigenous Peoples; establishing and strengthening Indigenous and cultural rights based upon the principle of equality among Indigenous People and the people of nations who may surround them; promoting the principles of First Nations Sovereignty; securing the choice of an enduring relationship with and the fulfillment of obligations owed by, the United States and Canada to First Nations; securing the full recognition of the international status of treaties made by First Nations with those powers, and fulfillment of those obligations by those powers; promoting full indigenous sovereign ownership of natural resources to whose alienation First Nations have never consented; fostering economic cooperation between First Nations, including trade, agriculture and industry; and promoting cooperation between First Nations in matters of education, culture, health and social welfare.

The North American Regional Council is an affiliate of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples.

II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 2 - Definition

A member within the meaning of this Council shall be defined as a member organization representing First Nations of a country, or association of First Nations representative of Indigenous Peoples of a country whose objectives are to further their economic self-sufficiency and to attain self-determination. The founding members are the Assembly of First Nations, Metis National Council, Native Council of Canada and National Congress of American Indians. Indigenous Peoples of First Nations shall be people living in countries which have a population composed of different ethnic or racial groups, who are descendants of the earliest populations which survive in the area, and who do not, as a group, control the national government of the countries within which they live.

Section 3 - Admission to Membership

Membership in the Council is open to Indigenous organizations within the meaning of the present Charter. The admission of any First Nations to membership in the organization will be done initially by the Executive Council. The criteria for membership into the North American Regional Council will be defined and adopted by the founding members of the North American Regional Council.

Section 4 - Privileges of Membership

A member of the Council shall act in accordance with the principles of the present Charter and shall be entitled to:

- a) participate through their chosen representatives in both the Regional Assembly and the Executive Council;
- b) cast votes on any matter concerning the membership as a whole;
- c) request support from the regional membership as a whole for a matter peculiar to themselves as a First Nation;
- d) utilize the good offices of the Regional Council in seeking support from the World Council of Indigenous Peoples.

Section 5 - Representation of Members

A member of the Council shall be represented by the following procedures:

- a) where the Regional Assembly declares that the Indigenous population has a body recognized as representative by the Indigenous population. These groups will select their own representative or representatives;
- b) where the Indigenous population has no such body and while the formation of a body recognized as representative by the Indigenous population is being promoted, a representative or representatives may be selected by the Executive Council on the basis of numbers and population, regions in the country, tribal affiliation, or organized bodies.

Section 6 - Observers

Observers shall be permitted at the direction of the Regional Assembly.

Section 7 - Suspension of Members

A member of the Council which has persistently violated the principles contained in the present Charter may be suspended from the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership by the Regional Assembly, upon recommendation of the Executive Council. The exercise of these rights and privileges may be similarly restored by the membership of the Regional Assembly upon the recommendation of the Executive Council.

III. ORGANS

Section 8 - Principal Organs

There are established as the principal organs of the Council, a Regional Assembly, an Executive Council, a Secretariat and such further organs as may be established by the Regional Assembly.

IV. REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Section 9 - Definition

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The Regional Assembly shall consist of all recognized delegates to the North American Regional Council at a meeting duly called and convened.

Section 10 - Powers

The Regional Assembly:

- a) may discuss any matter within the scope of the Council;
- b) may make recommendations to members or to other organizations or agencies;
- c) shall direct the making of reports or studies for internal use of the Council;
- d) shall consider and direct any affiliation of the Council with other organizations or agencies;
- e) shall receive and consider the reports it receives from the Secretariat and from others within the Council;
- f) shall direct the Secretariat in its functions;
- g) shall have the powers necessary to conduct its business, including the power to receive and expend funds and to consider and approve the budget of the Council.

Section 11 - Voting

Each Member of the North American Regional Council shall have one vote.

Section 12 - Resolution of Disputes Regarding Delegates

In the case of any dispute regarding the delegates of any First Nation, the Regional Assembly may resolve the matter or delegate the matter at its discretion.

Section 13 - Meetings

The Regional Assembly shall meet in regular sessions once every two years or at such intervals as may be determined by the Regional Assembly or the Executive Council.

- a) Special Regional Assemblies may be called by the Executive Council, or by the Secretariat upon the request of a majority of its members.

- b) The Regional Assembly shall adopt its own rules of procedures;
- c) The Regional Assembly shall select the Chairman of each regular Regional Assembly.

Section 14 - Subsidiary Organizations or Agencies

The Regional Assembly may establish committees or working groups as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions.

V. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Section 15 - Composition

The Executive Council shall initially consist of the founding members of the North American Regional Council who are the Assembly of First Nations, Metis National Council, Native Council of Canada and National Congress of American Indians.

The Executive Council will have two Co-Chairmen, one from Canada and one from the United States of America. The Chairmanship from each country shall rotate as determined by the Executive Council. The Co-Chairmen will sit on the World Council of Indigenous Peoples' Executive Council as representatives of the North American Regional Council. The Co-Chairmen will be responsible for overseeing the business of the North American Region.

Section 16 - Functions and Powers

The functions and powers of the Executive Council shall be defined by the Regional Assembly. In any situation arising, wherein no direction has been received from the Regional Assembly and where an immediate response is necessary, the Executive Council shall act in accordance with those principles set out in this Charter. The Executive Council shall seek funding for the North American Regional Council.

Section 17 - Voting

- a) Each member organization shall have one vote;

- c) Decisions of the Executive Council on all other matters shall be made by an affirmative vote of the majority unless the Council itself or the Regional Assembly decides to require a greater number on any specific issue or types of issues.

Section 18 - Procedures

- a) The Executive Council shall be so organized as to be able to function continuously;
- b) The Executive Council shall hold periodic meetings at which each of its members shall be represented by a specifically designated representative;
- c) The Executive Council may hold meetings at such places which, in its judgement, will best facilitate its work;
- d) The Executive Council may establish committees or working groups as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions;
- e) The Executive Council shall adopt its own rules of procedure;
- f) Any organization which is not a member of the Executive Council shall be able to participate in any discussion concerning matters of direct concern to them at the discretion of the Executive Council.

VI. SECRETARIAT

Section 19 - Composition

The Executive Council shall incorporate a Secretariat to carry out the administrative, legal and program functions of the North American Regional Council of the World Council of Indigenous People. The membership of the Secretariat will be the membership of the Executive Council.

Section 20 - Staff

The staff shall be hired by the Secretariat. Appropriate staffs may be permanently assigned, as required, to any organ of the Council. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

VII. RATIFICATION

Section 21 - Ratification

This Charter shall be open for signature to all First Nations in North America and shall be ratified by signatory First Nations in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. This Charter shall come into effect when it is signed by the four founding organizations representing the First Nations of North America.

Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the joint Chairmen of the North American Regional Council.

VIII. AMENDMENTS

Section 22 - Adoption of Amendments

Amendments to the present Charter shall become effective when they have been adopted by a vote of 2/3 of the delegates of the Regional Assembly present and voting.

December 12, 1983

RESOLUTION 8

MOVED: By George Manuel
SECONDED: By Ossie Crusse

ADOPTED

THAT the following items be on the agenda for the next General Assembly;

1. That the Charter be amended to provide two members on the Executive Council for North America, i.e. one from Canada and one from USA.
2. That the Charter clarify the importance of the goal of self-determination for WCIP.
3. That the Charter specify that the objective of Indigenous Peoples must be decolonization from nation-state governments.

RESOLUTION 9

MOVED: By Aslak Nils Sara
SECONDED: By Ossie Crusse

TO proceed as planned to hold the 4th General Assembly in Mexico, June 1 - 11, 1984.

RESOLUTION 10

MOVED: By Aslak Nils Sara

THAT the President implement the decisions on the pre-agenda.

THAT the theme for the 4th General Assembly be "Indigenous Peoples' Self-Determination".

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the original members of the North American Regional Council, being the National Congress of American Indians, the Native Council of Canada, the Assembly of First Nations and the Metis National Council have adopted an interim Charter for the North American Region; and

WHEREAS the next stage is the convening of a General Assembly of First Nations of North America for the purpose of finalizing the Charter and striking the necessary Committees and Institutions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this General Assembly be convened at Batoche, Saskatchewan, for three days during the period of July 18 - 28, 1985, to coincide with the Metis Commemoration of their Centenary (specific dates to be determined later).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assembly of First Nations be encouraged to co-host the Assembly with the Metis National Council representative in Saskatchewan, along with representatives from the National Congress of American Indians and the Native Council of Canada and the two interim Co-chairpersons of the North American Regional Council.

Adopted by the North American Regional Council at the IVth General Assembly of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in Panama City, Panama - September 26, 1984

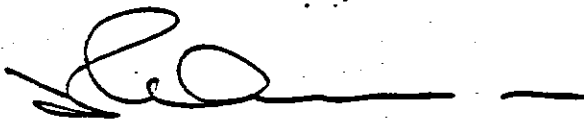
FORMATION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF THE
WORLD COUNCIL OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS the First Nations of North America are desirous of ensuring solidarity among their peoples and to this end have agreed to establish a North American Regional Council of Indigenous peoples affiliated to the World Council of Indigenous People;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of First Nations, Metis National Council, Native Council of Canada and the National Congress of American Indians have agreed to accept in principle the draft charter of the North American Regional Council which is appended to this resolution on the understanding that revisions to the draft charter shall take place in sufficient time for a final draft to be adopted within a year from this date.

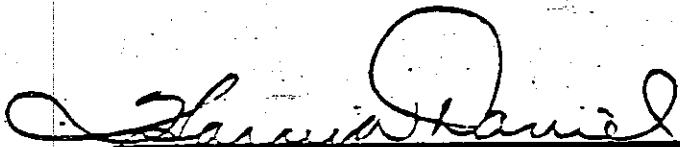
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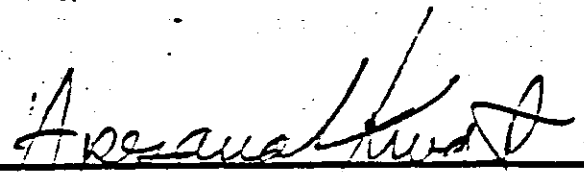
Assembly of First Nations



Metis National Council



Native Council of Canada



National Congress of American Indians

DATED this

27th

day of

September

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