



REGROUPEMENT  
DES CENTRES  
D'AMITIÉ AUTOCHTONES  
DU QUÉBEC INC.



## **PRESS RELEASE**

For immediate distribution

### **The FNEC and the RCAAQ Denounce Racism and Discrimination Against First Nations**

Wendake, October 18, 2006. – The First Nations Education Council (FNEC) and the Regroupement des centres d’amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) are presenting a paper before the Committee on Culture as part of the consultation and public hearings on the document “Towards a Government Policy to Fight Against Racism and Discrimination.”

The FNEC and the RCAAQ welcome the Government’s efforts to enable each citizen to play his or her rightful role in society. However, the FNEC and the RCAAQ firmly believe that the problems facing First Nations should be looked at from a wider perspective. In addition, they are surprised that the Government of Quebec can affirm that the measures set in place as part of the policy can be of benefit to First Nations as they are excluded from it.

Ms. Cloutier, President of the RCAAQ, affirms “in its role as designated representative by the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL) for questions relative to urban First Nations, the RCAAQ believes this process should take into account the historical, political, legal and social contexts that affect First Nations and in view of this contain a specific element for them.”

Ms. Lise Bastien, Director of the FNEC, recalls that members of First Nations communities have dealt with racism and discrimination over centuries. She insists that the field of education is rife with acts of racism and discrimination.

As far as the media is concerned, Ms. Bastien adds “It is intolerable to use humour and “freedom of expression” to hide behind when saying racist and discriminatory things that are humiliating and hurtful for First Nations. This has become all too common in recent times.”

The document presents the position of the FNEC and the RCAAQ on the Policy to Fight Against Racism and Discrimination and sets out recommendations for the drawing up of a policy containing an additional section specifically designed for First Nations.

The First Nations Education Council is an organization which has represented 22 communities across Quebec for over 20 years. Its main mission is to defend the interests of First Nations communities with a view to improving education services provided for all First Nations students.

The Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec is an organization that represents the rights and interests of First Nations who are in the urban environment. It is the provincial wing of the eight Centres d'amitié du Québec.

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