**Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

**Seventeenth Session, 8-12 July 2024**

**Item 10: Future work of the Expert Mechanism, and follow up to the thematic studies and advice**

**Wednesday July 10th**

**Joint Statement from the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Canada):**

Amnistie Francophone; Association Tinhinan; British Columbia Assembly of First Nations; British Columbia Treaty Commission; Canadian Friends Service Committee; Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government; Quebec Native Women – Femme Autochtones Quebec; Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs; Ellen Gabriel, Kanehsatà:ke Land Defender; Hup-Wil-Lax-A, Kirby Muldoe; International Chief Wilton Littlechild; Joshua Nichols, Professor McGill University; Lea Nicholas Mackenzie; Mariam Wallet Aboubarkine

We are pleased to present the following Joint Statement on behalf of the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which brings together a number of Indigenous Nations and organizations, as well as civil society partners in Canada.

In respect to agenda item 10, the Expert Mechanism’s future work, our Nations and organizations recommend that consideration be given to a thematic study on measures to revitalize Indigenous legal orders, to recognize Indigenous laws and legal systems, and to provide recognition of such laws and traditions in State legislation, judicial processes and in international law.

Article 5 of the *Declaration* states that all Indigenous Peoples “have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions.” The Declaration further underlines the necessity of legal processes providing “due respect” to Indigenous Peoples’ land tenure systems (Article 26) and “rules and legal systems” (Article 40).

A study examining measures to recognize and revitalize Indigenous legal systems would contribute greatly to the implementation of Articles 5, 26, and 40, and related articles including Articles 3, 4, 27, 31, 33, and 37.

One of the common features of colonialism is the suppression of Indigenous Peoples’ distinctive laws and legal systems. The imposition of colonial legal orders has been a tool of dispossession, marginalization and genocide. Formal recognition of Indigenous laws and legal systems, and support for their revitalization and application, is a critical part of remedying these harms.

This requires action from States. A future study by the Expert Mechanism could help clarify the most effective and appropriate ways to support, financially and through policy, the revitalization and application of Indigenous laws and legal systems. We would look forward to working collaboratively on these important matters with all rightsholders and stakeholders, particularly the Expert Mechanism and the concerned Indigenous Peoples and Member States.