

STRENGTH

PEACE

UNITY

Mohawk Council of Kahnawake

P.O. Box 720
Kahnawake Mohawk Territory J0L 1B0
OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF CHIEFS



Tel.: (450)632-7500
Fax: (450)638-5958
Website: www.kahnawake.com

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Paul St-Pierre Plamondon, Leader of the Parti Québécois (PQ)
National Assembly of Québec
1045, rue des Parlementaires,
Québec, QC G1A

RE: OFFICIAL REJECTION OF THE PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS "BLUE BOOK"

On behalf of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, we officially reject the Parti Québécois' "Blue Book" as a legitimate vision for an independent Quebec outside the Canadian federation. While we regard much of the document as political rhetoric, we respond as a matter of principle, in defence of our rights and interests. Having reviewed and analyzed the Blue Book in full, we set out below our principal concerns with the chapters and political aspirations your party has outlined:

- 1. Failure to consult and accommodate, contrary to domestic and international law.*
- 2. Potential infringement of the constitutionally protected relationship between the Crown and First Nations under section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.*
- 3. Failure to comply with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) with respect to language and culture.*

1. Failure to Consult and Accommodate

First Nations rights holders in Quebec have not been consulted on the PQ's plans to establish a new, independent state on our traditional territories. The Blue Book was also not made available in English to First Nations English-speaking communities, further excluding nations from equal access to, and input on, plans that directly affect our traditional territories, rights, and interests. Encouraging the electorate to grant your party a majority on the premise that a referendum could proceed promptly and without legal obstacle is inaccurate¹.

The duty to consult extends to both the federal and provincial Crowns and is triggered by the potential infringement of, or adverse impact on, Aboriginal and treaty rights protected by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982². As in Alberta, this reflects a pattern in which provincial governments have advanced independence initiatives without first consulting the original

¹ <https://globalnews.ca/news/12052682/pq-referendum-minority-majority-quebec-election/>

² <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/ijr-dja/35pedia-wiki35/p8.html>

inhabitants of the territories concerned, despite their constitutional rights. The courts have been clear on this obligation. In *Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation v Alberta*³ (Chief Electoral Officer), 2026 ABKB 375, the Alberta Court of King's Bench quashed the Chief Electoral Officer's approval of a referendum petition on Alberta independence, finding that Alberta had failed to fulfil its constitutional duty to consult First Nations before advancing a process capable of fundamentally affecting Treaty rights. The political ambitions of a province seeking to separate from the federation are therefore not merely a political exercise; they constitute a constitutional act with direct and serious implications for First Nations peoples and treaty relationships protected under section 35.

Further, Quebec's independence would affect lands and territories over which First Nations already hold internationally recognized rights of ownership, use, development, and control. Article 26(2) of UNDRIP affirms that Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop, and control the lands, territories, and resources they possess by virtue of traditional ownership, occupation, or use, as well as those they have otherwise acquired. As a result, separating from the Canadian federation goes beyond domestic constitutional law. It engages internationally recognized rights that demand a standard of consultation, consent, and legal engagement that far exceeds anything the PQ government has put forward.

Kahnawà:ke was not notified of or consulted on the Blue Book, nor were we provided access to an English version. We understand through public reporting that a chapter addressing Indigenous relations was shared with the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL) and that this chapter remained blank in the publicly available version. Neither the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) nor the AFNQL represents the interests of the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke, and any position taken by either organization on rights-based issues does not speak for Kahnawà:ke. We therefore consider this an absence of consultation.

If the PQ government attains political power and advances a referendum without genuine consultation and accommodation, the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke will pursue legal action on grounds consistent with those recognized in *Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation v Alberta*.

2. The Crown's Relationship with First Nations

Potential infringement or adverse impact on Aboriginal and treaty rights is the key factor triggering the duty to consult⁴. Quebec's separation from the federation would alter the foundational legal relationship between Indigenous nations and the Crown, engaging the honour of the Crown, which requires governments to act with fairness and integrity in their dealings with First Nations. Advancing a constitutional restructuring of this magnitude without engaging Indigenous nations would breach that fundamental trust.

³ https://albertacourts.ca/docs/default-source/ca/2026abca0216.pdf?sfvrsn=fe4da82_1

⁴ <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/ijr-dja/35pedia-wiki35/p8.html>

3. Failure to Comply with UNDRIP on Language and Culture

Quebec is home to 11 Indigenous nations, represented across 55 communities⁵. The Cree and Inuit nations are governed under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, later joined by the Naskapi under the Northeastern Quebec Agreement, while other First Nations are governed under federal reserve lands administered pursuant to the Indian Act. All hold constitutionally protected rights. A substantial proportion of Quebec's First Nations population speaks English as a first language — a direct consequence of colonization and the residential and day school system⁶ — and relies on English to access healthcare and other essential services, while facing institutional barriers under Quebec's language laws⁷. Kahnawà:ke and organizations, including the Coalition of English-Speaking First Nations Communities⁸ in Quebec, have raised these concerns at the national and international level without meaningful response, a gap that would only deepen under the Blue Book's proposed language regime.

Your party's vision to end Canadian bilingualism and make French the dominant language of the state — including the justice system, government administration, commerce, education, media, and training⁹ — would directly undermine Kahnawà:ke's own linguistic and cultural vision and create additional barriers for English-speaking First Nations. The exclusion of First Nations languages and cultures from that vision disregards our existence and perpetuates institutional colonization.

Quebec played a direct role in the erosion of Indigenous languages through its co-management with the federal government of Indian Day and residential schools. For over a century, these institutions worked to eliminate both language and culture, a process the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has characterized as cultural genocide. The Kanien'kehá:ka language predates Confederation and contact with the French and English, and is the foundation of our culture, carried through oral tradition, song, dance, and ceremony¹⁰. To present French as the only language in Quebec to have faced an existential threat is inaccurate and disregards history.

Quebec's proposed future excludes First Nations peoples in a manner inconsistent with the human-rights standards of the international bodies it seeks to join, including the United Nations. The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has pointed to Article 13(1) of UNDRIP in the context of

⁵ <https://www.quebec.ca/en/government/quebec-at-a-glance/first-nations-and-inuit/profile-of-the-nations/about-nations>

⁶ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-residential-schools-1.6053558>

⁷ Metallic, Janine Elizabeth. Bill 96 and Indigenous Language Sovereignty in Quebec: Refusal, Resurgence, and Multilingual Justice. *Journal of Indigenous Social Development*. Vol. 14, Issue 1. 2026.

⁸ Coalition of English Speaking First Nations Communities in Quebec. Submission on Bill 96. The Committee on Culture and Education. October 2021.

⁹ Parti Québécois. (2026). Blue Book on the Independence of Quebec. Parti Québécois.

¹⁰ <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/kanyenkeha-mohawk-language>

the UN's International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022–2032), calling on states to strengthen their efforts on Indigenous language and education rights¹¹. Any claim to statehood by the PQ government would require alignment with UNDRIP¹² and the international covenants guaranteeing freedom from discrimination and equality before the law¹³. Continued exclusion of First Nations peoples from consultation and equitable recognition under Quebec's language laws only widens the gap between an equitable *Quebec state* and its international obligations. Kahnawà:ke continues to raise Canada's and Quebec's failures to uphold Indigenous rights, domestic and international law, and reconciliation commitments before international bodies.

There is a profound and ongoing injustice in the fact that a language adopted by First Nations peoples in Quebec under conditions of duress now produce health, educational, and economic disadvantages for those same peoples in their own homelands.

An alternative path exists. British Columbia has pursued partnership with First Nations on economic development, resource management, and regional infrastructure, producing meaningful progress on reconciliation. Quebec's Blue Book instead continues to exclude First Nations peoples from its vision, omits consultation on legislation affecting First Nations rights, and fails to reconcile its language laws with fundamental rights. Its stated ambition to separate from the federation would further diminish those rights and protections.

We reject the Blue Book and record our disappointment that your party's vision neither includes nor accurately reflects our rights or our existence. We emphasize that the duty to consult is a well-established legal obligation, affirmed in multiple court decisions, including in Alberta, where a comparable independence movement is underway. Your party's continued advancement of this agenda — including suggestions to the electorate that a referendum could proceed simply and swiftly under a majority government — does not reflect this legal reality.

Reconciliation is not achieved through the unilateral assertion of a provincial vision, nor through the exclusion of Indigenous peoples from processes that govern this territory. It is achieved through partnership, consultation, and recognition of rights that predate the existence of Quebec itself.

The question before your government is not whether Indigenous peoples will continue to assert their rights — they will. It is whether Quebec will meet that assertion equitably or continue to stand as an obstacle to it. Canadian courts, the Constitution, and international law all recognize First Nations rights, languages, and cultures, and have established a duty to consult that both levels of government must meet.

¹¹ [UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#)

¹² [UNDRIP](#)

¹³ [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights United Nations](#)

We expect any future government of Quebec to take this responsibility seriously and work meaningfully with First Nations rights holders to chart a path forward that is equitable and honourable toward this region's first inhabitants.

Sincerely,

In Peace and Friendship,

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CHIEFS



Ohén:ton I:rate ne Ratitsénhaïenhs
Grand Chief of Kahnawake

c.c Christine Frechette, Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ)
Charles Millard, Québec Liberal Party (PLQ)
Ruba Ghazal and Sol Zanette, Québec Solidaire (QS)
Eric Duhaime, Conservative Party of Québec (PCQ)