



HAUDENOSAUNEE

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Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs Leadership Reaffirms Inherent Jurisdiction, Ancestral Responsibilities and Matrilineal Identity Under the Two Row Wampum

Today we reaffirm our inherent jurisdiction over the lands, waters, people, and governance system entrusted to us. Our jurisdiction is not delegated to us by any external government; it lives in our laws, our agreements with the natural world and in our ancestral inheritances that root us to the land. Our relationship to the land predates settler states, borders and political systems. Our people receive our identity, clan, and responsibilities from our mothers, established by our laws and culture. Our identities are not given or validated by outside governments. Because of this, we are **NOT** immigrants. We are Haudenosaunee-People of the Longhouse, Indigenous to the lands of North America and to the territories now called the United States and Canada. Our citizenship belongs to our Nation and the laws of our systems & culture. This is further reinforced by the United Nation Declaration on the rights of Indigenous people. We walk forward under the law and spirit of the Kaswentha (Two Row Wampum Treaty). The principles of the Two Row guide our diplomacy, decisions, relationships and responsibilities. “The Two Row wampum treaty has never been extinguished and both the United States and Canada have long been aware of this agreement; their continued failure to honor it only strengthens our resolve to uphold its principles and now we call on them to move forward with integrity, respect and a renewed commitment to walking their path without interfering in ours.” Tehana’karine – Bear Clan. We acknowledge that the elective governments within our territories and of United States and Canada are present and active within and across the lands that surround and overlap our territories, but their presence does not confer jurisdiction equal to that of Haudenosaunee Governance, which long predates their formation. With respect, we affirm that while external governments exercise authority through their own institutions, engagement with us must honor this fundamental distinction and respect the responsibilities each of us carries. The Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs assert the following:

- We will continue to uphold our authority and jurisdiction over our lands, water, citizenship and community well-being.
- We do NOT permit external bodies onto our lands without invitation. No external government, agency, organization or law enforcement body may enter, operate or carry out any activity on our territory without our explicit invitation through the proper Haudenosaunee diplomatic process. This aligns with the two-row principle; Our canoe is ours to guide.
- Violations, attempts to override, ignore or diminish our authority will be documented and addressed using our own legal, political and cultural systems.

The MNCC will continue to fulfill our responsibilities with clarity, determination, and care for the generations yet to come.