



# Grand Council Treaty #3

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Grand Council Treaty #3 Stands in Solidarity with the Mi'kmaw Nation on Fishing Rights**

Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh and Grand Council Treaty #3 stand in resolute solidarity with the Mi'kmaw Nation. The eruption of violence in Nova Scotia between Mi'kmaw and non-indigenous fishermen over the past several weeks has been closely observed by the leadership and citizens of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3.

Since representatives of the Mi'kmaw Nation declared a state of emergency in Nova Scotia last month over the rising violence being experienced by their fishermen and community members, the situation has steadily worsened. The violence is a result of Sipekne'katik First Nation acquiring five licenses as a moderate livelihood fishery. The area at the center of the violence has a total of 979 licenses.

"It is extremely concerning to me to see this sort of violence occur against our relations in the Mi'kmaw territory," said Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh. "We have long known the Mi'kmaw for defending our inherent and Treaty rights from encroachment by those that would like to see an end to our hunting and fishing rights. I would like to state outright that we support them in this struggle just as they have stood by us in the past. I urge all levels of government to step up and defend the rights and physical safety of our Mi'kmaw relatives from these violent mobs before an incident occurs that sparks unrest across this country."

Grand Council Treaty #3 seeks to protect, preserve, and enhance the inherent and Treaty rights of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3. Through its Territorial Planning Unit, the Treaty right to hunt and fish is a primary focus area for the Nation and included in this work is discussions regarding the revival of fisheries for the benefit of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3. Much of this work is predicated on the *R. v Marshall* Supreme Court of Canada decision that sided with the Mi'kmaw Nation in favour of their fishing rights.

"We will never forget our sacred responsibilities to the lands and water that were recognized and affirmed by our Treaty and therefore entrenched in the Constitution of Canada," said Ogichidaa Francis Kavanaugh, "We, like the Mi'kmaw, take this sacred responsibility very seriously, so it is difficult to see how we as indigenous peoples could ever deliberately choose to act in a way that would jeopardize the sustainability of our waters. With this in mind it becomes clear that these types of confrontations are not about sustainability and are in fact driven by deeply-rooted systemic racism. This is why I know our Nation will stand in solidarity with the Mi'kmaw whatever should happen going forward."

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