



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **POWERFUL MESSAGE FROM QUEBEC FIRST NATIONS BROADCAST ON TIMES SQUARE DEMANDS RESPECT FOR THEIR RIGHTS**

**New York, April 22, 2025** – A striking action took place in the heart of Manhattan, as a message from the Quebec First Nations delegation to the United Nations was displayed for a full 24 hours on one of the iconic billboards in Times Square - one of the world's most famous and high-traffic locations.

**"Indigenous Peoples' Rights: A Call to Respect #UNDRIp in Québec (Canada)"** - this is what thousands of passersby will see looping throughout the day. The bold message is a direct and unambiguous appeal to the governments of Québec and Canada to uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIp).

In parallel with their participation in the 24th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), members of the Assembly of First Nations Québec-Labrador (AFNQL) delegation visited Times Square this morning to witness their message being displayed live.

"We wanted to raise awareness and highlight to the international community the need for Quebec to fully commit to the implementation of the UNDRIP, an essential gesture of respect for the rights of Indigenous peoples. We also wanted to highlight the inconsistency of a federal implementation of the UNDRIP when a State like Quebec makes no concrete commitment to it, forcing our Nations to turn to the courts to enforce rights that should be undeniable," declared AFNQL Chief Francis Verreault-Paul at the unveiling.

The delegation undertook this bold initiative to emphasize that the rights recognized under UNDRIP must be fully implemented - including in federated states, such as in Québec.

#### **About the AFNQL delegation**

Coordinated by the Assembly of First Nations Québec-Labrador (AFNQL), the delegation includes representatives from the Innu Nation communities (Ekuanitshit, Essipit, Mashtueiatsh, Matimekush-Lac John, Pakua Shipi, Pessamit, Nutashkuan, Unamen Shipu and Uashat mak Mani-utenam), the Anishnabe First Nations of Lac-Simon and Kebaowek, as well as the Atikamekw First Nation of Wemotaci. The members of the delegation are:

- Francis Verreault-Paul, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Québec-Labrador (AFNQL)
- Raymond Bellefleur, Unamen Shipu Chief
- Marcel Lalo, Pakua Shipi Chief
- Réal Tettaut, Nutashkuan Chief

- Mike Mckenzie, Uashat mak Mani-utenam Chief
- Martin Dufour, Essipit Chief
- Jean-Charles Piétacho, Ekuanitshit Chief
- Suzanne Bacon-Charland, Pessamit vice-chief
- Gilbert Dominique, Mashteuiatsh Chief
- Réal Mckenzie, Matimekush-Lac John Chief
- Lance Haymond, Chief of Kebaowek First Nation
- Justin Roy, Councillor, Kebaowek First Nation
- Lucien Wabanonik, Chief of the Anishnabe Nation of Lac-Simon
- Jon-Evan Quoquochi, Vice-Chief of the Atikamekw First Nation of Wemotaci

For more information on the mission: [www.apnql.com/onu-2025](http://www.apnql.com/onu-2025)

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**Source: Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL)**

**Photo from the unveiling:**

*Photo from left to right: Serge Ashini Goupil, Councillor, Innu Nation; Justin Roy, Councillor, Kebaowek First Nation; Jay-Mikko Niquay-Nequado, Lac-Simon Youth Representative; Suzanne Bacon-Charland, Pessamit vice-chief; Lucien Wabanonik, Chief of the Anishnabe Nation of Lac-Simon; Lance Haymond, Chief of Kebaowek First Nation; Martin Dufour, Essipit Chief; Marcel Lalo, Pakua Shipi Chief; Jean-Claude Therrien Pinette, Chief of Staff, Uashat Mak Mani-Utenam; Ghislain Picard, Spokesperson for the Innu Chiefs of the Nine Communities of Nitassinan; Danny Pien, Councillor, Anishnabe Nation of Lac-Simon; Miguel Coocoo Chachai, Councillor of the Atikamekw First Nation of Wemotaci; Raymond Bellefleur, Unamen Shipu Chief; Jon-Evan Quoquochi, Vice-Chief of the Atikamekw First Nation of Wemotaci; Réal Tettaut, Nutashkuan Chief; Mike Mckenzie, Uashat mak Mani-utenam Chief; Francis Verreault-Paul, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Québec-Labrador (AFNQL).*

**Link to the video of the Times Square unveiling:** [April 22 Times Square - Google Drive](http://April 22 Times Square - Google Drive)

**Link to the evolving press kit :**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1G4Akl3ZdvigRZZYM55uu\\_AsHiNcsciM5?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1G4Akl3ZdvigRZZYM55uu_AsHiNcsciM5?usp=sharing)

**For media inquiries or to schedule an interview:**

**Pascal Deslauriers**

Media Relations Lead, SEIZE03  
514-295-2103  
[p.deslauriers@seize03.ca](mailto:p.deslauriers@seize03.ca)

**Jérôme Gill-Couture**

Political Communications Advisor, AFNQL  
438-334-5742  
[jgill-couture@apnql.com](mailto:jgill-couture@apnql.com)