



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Roundtable on Aboriginal peoples' Participation in Canadian Foreign Policy" resulted from the vision and work of the Director of the Native Law Centre of Canada, Professor Sakej Youngblood Henderson. His plans for this meeting were realized through the generous support of the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, which works with Ottawa's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). The purpose of the Roundtable was on evaluating our past efforts in foreign policy and suggesting how to improve the structure and process. The objective of the Roundtable was to enable a more inclusive and respectful approach of the constitutional voice of Aboriginal peoples as a crucial part of foreign policy development of the postcolonial Canada nation.

The initial rountable, subsequent focus groups, and the vetting of the initial report was an opportunity to expand the input of the small number of seasoned policy practitioners from within and beyond government to compare notes and experiences regarding Aboriginal participation in the development and implementation of Canadian foreign policy. The project was designed to create a better understanding of the multiple challenges facing Aboriginal participation in foreign policy making and develop ways of improving such participation. Adopting an approach that emphasized consultation, dialogue, and consensus, the roundtable sought to involve the broadest possible range of Aboriginal participants in the process. Through telephone dialogues and interviews with those involved, the exchange of opinion and a willingness to share experience demonstrated the importance of the roundtable and the necessity for the designing development strategies. These discussions, along with focus group sessions conducted before and

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