



**REPORT FROM THE ROUNDTABLE:  
CANADA, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE HEMISPHERE**

March 22-23, 2000

Winnipeg

On March 22, 2000 leaders and representatives of Indigenous Peoples from Canada, the United States, Guatemala, Panama, and Mexico, business leaders, government officials, and others met to reflect on Indigenous Peoples' issues in the Hemisphere. Organised by the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development, the roundtable was aimed at contributing public views to the ongoing dialogue on Indigenous Peoples' issues. Participants included Assembly of First Nations, National Congress of American Indians, the Prime Minister's personal representative for the Americas of the Department of Indian Affairs, Chief Lyall Hattisum, Co-Chairman of the Roundtable. A discussion paper prepared by Paul Chartrand for the roundtable is attached.

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**1. Framing the Discussion**

The day began with a Mayan ceremony conducted by Gregorio Cruz from the Coordinating Council of Organisations of the Mayan Peoples of Guatemala. As a part of that ceremony, candles were lit and burned until the close of the roundtable. Following the ceremonial opening, David Chartrand, the President of the Manitoba Métis Federation, extended a warm welcome to everyone. He drew attention to the role of the Métis People in founding Manitoba and questioned the commitment of the Canadian government to the Métis as well as other Indigenous Peoples in the Hemisphere. Indigenous Peoples from across the continent continue to face similar challenges, including dislocation and despair.

Steve Lee, the Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development (CCFPD) and the Chair, thanked the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) for helping to organise the roundtable. Paul Chartrand for his participation in Winnipeg. He said that the mandate of the CCFPD is to contribute to the development of Canada's foreign policy and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas. He drew attention to work related to Indigenous Peoples' issues in the past, including the National Forum on Aboriginal Affairs (October, 1997) and the National Forum on Circumpolar Relations (May-June, 1998) as well as the "Indigenous Peoples' Art and the Issue of Canada" (March 12, 2000, Vancouver).

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