

The Government of Canada provides funding to indigenous people to enable them to appeal their cases, where the issues could establish a legal precedent.

A major issue for indigenous people in Canada is the resolution of claims to land. The federal government addresses claims based on aboriginal title - comprehensive claims - or breaches or non-fulfillment of specific obligations - specific claims. I would like to give you a few details on recent progress.

On April 30, 1990 an agreement-in-principle was signed to settle the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut comprehensive claim. It will provide approximately 17,500 Inuit with over 350,000 square kilometres of land (an area larger than Finland) and \$580 million in cash compensation.

In April, 1990 the umbrella final agreement for settlement of Yukon Indian land claim was initialled. It will, if ratified by all parties, provide some 7,000 Yukon Indians with over 41,000 square kilometres of land (an area equivalent to the land mass of Switzerland) and \$248 million. A final agreement to settle the Dene-Métis claim was also reached. Although a recent assembly of the Dene has requested changes to the agreement, it will, if ratified by all parties, provide approximately 13,000 Dene and Métis with more than 181,000 square kilometres of land (almost the combined size of Belgium, Ireland, Denmark and the Netherlands) and \$500 million.

In addition to land and cash compensation, comprehensive land claims settlements guarantee indigenous people a decision-making role in land management, resource development, fish and wildlife harvesting and the environment. Settlement of such claims is one of the pillars of the federal commitment to strengthen the political and economic institutions in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

In the western province of British Columbia, where the federal government has accepted 18 claims, the provincial Premier publicly declared on July 26, 1990 his government's commitment to become involved in solving land claims. In the east, negotiators have concluded a framework agreement with the Labrador Inuit Association, which represents 3800 Inuit and settlers.

In another case with which you will be familiar Madam Chairman, the Canadian Government has long acknowledged that it has an outstanding obligation to the Lubicon Indians. In a recent decision the United Nations Human Rights Committee, confirming the historical inequities which the government acknowledged and commenting on the government's offer to the Band, expressed the view that the government "proposes to rectify the situation by a remedy that the Committee deems appropriate".