

*Canada's Plan  
to End the  
Indian Act,  
Indian Reserves  
& Indian Status*



PREPARED BY RUSS  
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# What's Happening Right Now

Canada is quietly restructuring how it deals with First Nations.

The goal: end the Indian Act and replace it with municipal/corporate-style “*Indigenous governments.*”

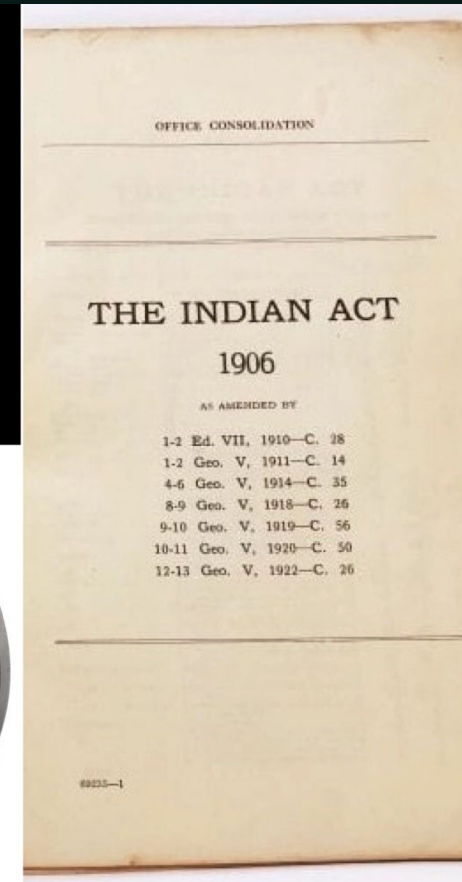
These changes are happening without First Nations consent.

Message: This is not reconciliation — it's a federal redesign of our rights and governments.

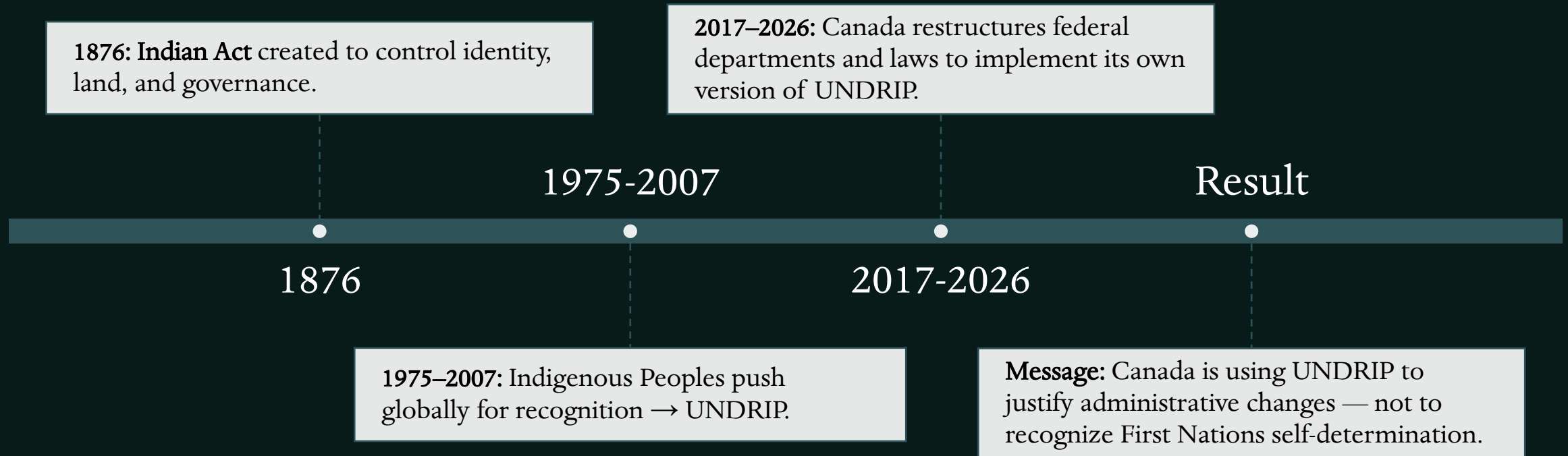


# Why This Matters to Every First Nation

- The Indian Act is colonial — but it also protects Treaty rights, land rights, and federal obligations.
- Canada wants to remove the Act before defining those obligations.
- Without protections, our rights can be weakened or replaced by administrative agreements.
- Message: Ending the Indian Act without consent puts Section 35 rights at risk.



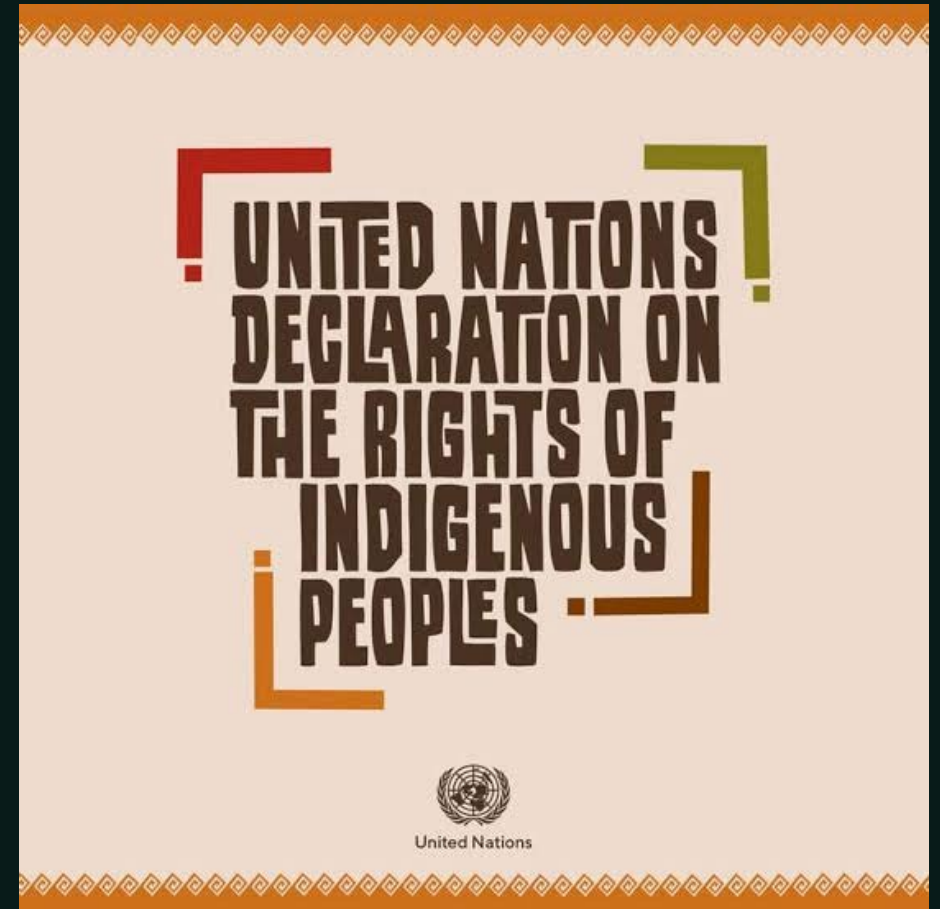
# How We Got Here



# UNDRIP: What It Actually Says

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- Indigenous Peoples have the right to self-determination.
- We have the right to our lands, territories, and resources.
- We have the right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).
- Message: UNDRIP supports Indigenous Nations — not federal control.





# Canada's Version of UNDRIP

- 2021: Canada passes UNDRIPA (Bill C-15).
- The federal Action Plan frames UNDRIP as a “*reconciliation framework*” — not a rights-affirming instrument.
- Canada uses UNDRIP to support modern treaties and administrative self-government, not nation-to-nation relationships.
- Message: Canada is redefining UNDRIP to fit its own agenda.

## Carney's Plan to End the Indian Act

“Ending the Indian Act must not mean ending First Nation Peoples.”



### Key Concern



Eliminate Indigenous legal status; Municipalize First Nations; Economic development without FPIC.



### Economic Reconciliation

Investors over rights; Fast-tracked projects; Loan guarantees increase debt.



### Self-Government Risks

Off-load federal responsibility; Narrow rights; Municipal/corporate status.



### Status Phase-Out

Second-generation cut-off; Reduces registered population; Administrative assimilation risk.



### Advocacy Position

Indigenous consent; International self-determination; Protect treaty & land rights; Development on Indigenous terms.

Source: Truth Before Reconciliation — Advocacy Brief.

# The Big Shift: Ending Department of Indian Affairs & Northern Development



Indigenous Services  
Canada

Services aux  
Autochtones Canada



**When self-determination is a reality for all, this Department will no longer need to exist.**

**SOURCE: Page 3, Departmental Plan 2018-2019**

**"As the first Minister of this new Department, I'm proud to present the 2018-2019 Departmental Plan. This is a transitional plan, as we actively engage with Indigenous peoples to shape Indigenous Services Canada. Ours may be the first government Department ever created with its own obsolescence as a goal."**

**"Over time, one fundamental measure of success will be that appropriate programs and services will be increasingly delivered not by the Government of Canada, but instead by Indigenous peoples. This work will be done in partnership with Indigenous leaders and Communities."**

**"The end goal is not only that the design, delivery and control of services — in all areas — are led by and for Indigenous peoples, but also that the Department will disappear over time."**

**SOURCE: Jane Philpott, Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, Departmental Plan 2018-2019k**

- 2017: Trudeau dissolves DIAND without First Nations consultation.
- 2019: Bill C-97 creates two new departments:
  - ISC (Indigenous Services Canada)
  - CIRNAC (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada)
- The Indian Act stays in place — but the machinery around it changes.
- Message: Canada changed the system around us without asking us.

# The Two-Track Strategy

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## TRACK 1 — ISC

- Transfers programs to First Nations.
- Builds “*capacity*” for municipal-style governance.
- Uses 10-year grants to shift responsibilities.

## TRACK 2 — CIRNAC

- Negotiates modern treaties and self-government agreements.
- Redesigns land policies.
- Moves First Nations toward corporate/municipal legal status.

## MESSAGE :

Both tracks lead to the same destination — ending the **Indian Act** and replacing it with administrative self-government.



# What This Means for Our Rights

- Modern treaties often require extinguishment or modification of Aboriginal and Treaty rights.
- Administrative self-government removes federal fiduciary duties.
- First Nations risk becoming municipal governments under provincial authority.
- Message: Without consent, our rights can be weakened, redefined, or removed.

**“the so-called ‘Inherent Right’ framework was drawn up behind closed doors by bureaucrats and imposed on First Nations against their will. Far from recognizing our Inherent Right to govern ourselves this policy merely entrenches Canada’s power to dictate what we can and cannot do as a People!”**

**- AFN National Chief Ovide Mercredi, March 6, 1997**



# What Canada Presented to the Governor-General (2021)

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- Federal officials outlined a plan to end the Indian Act using:
  - Modern treaties
  - Service transfer
  - Administrative self-government
- This plan was presented without First Nations agreement.
- Message: Canada is moving ahead — whether we agree or not.



# Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (Canada-AFN)



- Created in 2017 and kept by the Carney government.
- It allows federal–First Nation meetings — but do not require consent.
- It helps Canada advance its agenda while appearing collaborative.
- Message: This mechanisms is not nation-to-nation — it is a federal management tool.



# What First Nations Can Do

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- 1. Assert Section 35 Rights
  - Demand that any transition protect and strengthen Aboriginal and Treaty rights.
- 2. Require Free, Prior & Informed Consent
  - Insist on UNDRIP-standard consent — not consultation.
- 3. Reject Municipal/Corporate Governance Models
  - Push back against administrative self-government.
- 4. Build Inter-Nation Unity
  - Coordinate across First Nations to develop a rights-based alternative, before October 2026 First Nations-First Ministers' Meeting.

## MESSAGE:

We must lead the process —  
not accept federal designs.



# What Communities Need to Know



- These changes affect identity, land, governance, and rights.
- They will shape the future for our children and grandchildren.
- Communities must be informed, organized, and involved.
- Message: Education is power — and unity is protection.

# A Different Path Forward

- Nation-to-Nation relationships based on Treaties.
- Recognition of First Nation laws and governance.
- Implementation of UNDRIP as international law, not federal policy.
- Collective action grounded in the principles of the Fourth World Indigenous Nations.
- Message: We can build our own future — but only if we act together.







# Closing Message

Canada is ending the Indian Act — not through consent, but through administrative restructuring. Our response must be collective, rights-based, and grounded in First Nation laws, Treaties, and international self-determination.





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Thank You

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Russ Diabo

[russdiabo@rogers.com](mailto:russdiabo@rogers.com)

[Russdiabo.com](http://Russdiabo.com)

