PRESS RELEASE

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MCA RESPONDS TO RECENT DISCUSSIONS ON THE FUTURE OF THE INDIAN ACT

During the First Nations and First Ministers' Meeting held in Ottawa on October 26, 2026, Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew called for the abolition of the Indian Act, while Prime Minister Mark Carney expressed openness to considering its reform or repeal. In light of these discussions, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) emphasizes the importance of ensuring that First Nations have a voice in decisions that affect their communities. **No one speaks for Akwesasne but Akwesasne.** Any decisions that may impact our community must be guided by our people and reflect their best interests.

MCA recognizes that the 1876 Indian Act is outdated and has severely affected how First Nations govern themselves for many years. However, each community must consider its own needs, priorities, and governance when determining what options are available for change for the betterment of their people. These differences must be respected and considered when discussing their future under the Indian Act or not.

As for Akwesasne, in 2013 the Mohawks of Akwesasne and Canada signed Agreements in Principles (AIPs) to begin negotiating a self-government agreement that will define a new relationship between Akwesasne and Canada. This important step was to collectively review the Indian Act and its antiquated provisions for a better legislation for the betterment of Akwesasne and its people. MCA believes more information and careful consideration are needed before any major changes to the Indian Act move forward. Our priority is to ensure that the rights and protections of the Mohawks of Akwesasne are maintained, including those related to our lands, governance, and tax exemptions. Any proposed changes must clearly explain how these protections will continue and ensure that our community is not negatively affected.

Akwesasne has already made significant progress in advancing its own path toward self-government through the Akwesasne-Canada Entewatathá:wi Self-Government Agreement (ESGA). This ongoing process seeks to strengthen Akwesasne's authority over its own affairs while ensuring that the rights and interests of our community remain protected. The agreement continues to be developed with community guidance and input and will ultimately require approval through a community vote before moving forward.

MCA believes that any broader discussions surrounding the Indian Act must take into consideration the work already underway in Akwesasne and the importance of allowing our community to determine its own path forward. Changes of this significance require time, meaningful engagement, and appropriate safeguards to ensure that the rights and protections of Akwesasró:non are not compromised.

MCA remains committed to advancing Akwesasne's self-government priorities and participating in discussions that support the future of First Nations. Above all, we believe that decisions affecting Akwesasne must be guided by our people.