



Whapmagoostui
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Chisasibi
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Wemindji
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Eastmain
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Waskaganish
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Nemaska
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Waswanipi
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Ouje-Bougoumou
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Mistissini
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Washaw Sibi
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PRESS RELEASE

STATEMENT OF THE GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (EYYOU ISTCHEE) / CREE NATION GOVERNMENT ON AMAZON FOREST FIRE DISASTER

Nemaska, Eeyou Istchee (September 5, 2019) –The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government joins the urgent calls from around the world to stop the fires devastating the forests of the Amazon and the Indigenous peoples who live there.

The Cree Nation understands the catastrophic effect of forest destruction on Indigenous societies. For more than 40 years, we have fought to protect from destruction the boreal forest of Eeyou Istchee that supports our traditional culture of hunting, fishing and trapping.

We know and have worked with some of the Indigenous peoples of the Amazon in Brazil. We cannot stand idly by as their lands, environment and way of life are destroyed. We cannot ignore the complicity of the Government of Brazil in a concerted effort to drive the Indigenous peoples of the Amazon from their lands and to destroy their societies in order to make way for unsustainable development.

It is no exaggeration to call the Government of Brazil's conduct tantamount to genocide. Its actions make a mockery of Brazil's obligations under the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*:

- to prevent any action dispossessing Indigenous peoples of their lands (art. 8.2(b));
- not to forcibly remove Indigenous peoples from their lands or territories (art. 10);
- to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples to their lands and resources (art. 26);
- to conserve and protect the environment of Indigenous lands (art. 29).

In encouraging the deforestation of the Amazon, the Government of Brazil also shows contempt for its obligations under the *Paris Agreement on Climate Change*. Its actions are contributing to the global warming that threatens, first and foremost, the Indigenous peoples of the world.

We have already seen the effects of climate change in Eeyou Istchee: dryer, hotter summers, shorter winters, loss of ice cover, more and larger wildfires, and loss of the fish and game we depend on for survival. These changes threaten our health, safety, food security and traditional way of life.



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Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)

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Cree Nation Government
Gouvernement de la Nation Crie

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The Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) / Cree Nation Government calls on the Government of Canada to support international efforts to stop the fires destroying the Amazon's forests and the Indigenous peoples living there. We reiterate our call for the Government of Canada to give legislative effect to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. And we call on all governments in Canada to work with Indigenous peoples to take effective action, within the framework of the Paris Agreement, to fight climate change so as to preserve our way of life.

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Contact: Melissa Saganash, Tel: (418) 691-1111