



Backgrounder

The Exploratory Process on Indian Registration, Band Membership and Citizenship

During the 2009 engagement on the Government's plan to implement the *Mclvor* decision, First Nations and other Aboriginal groups identified a number of issues on Indian registration, Band membership and First Nations citizenship that went beyond the scope of the decision and the legislative amendments recently passed under Bill C-3. At that time, First Nations and other Aboriginal groups also called for a federal commitment to a joint process that would substantively examine and address these broader issues.

The Government of Canada recognized the importance of these issues to First Nations and other Aboriginal groups. The Government also recognized that issues surrounding Indian registration, Band membership and citizenship are complex and that First Nations and other Aboriginal groups hold diverse views on these matters. It is clear that broader reform cannot be achieved overnight, or in isolation, and requires the gathering of information and the identification of critical issues for discussion prior to embarking on any process for substantive change.

As a result, when Bill C-3 was tabled on March 11, 2010, the Government announced its intention to launch an exploratory process on issues relating to Indian registration, Band membership and citizenship. With the passage of Bill C-3, the exploratory process is now being officially launched. Activities under the exploratory process are expected to take place over a period of one year, ending in December 2011.

The exploratory process is an Aboriginal-led initiative that is meant to examine and discuss the broader issues relating to Indian registration, Band membership and citizenship that go beyond the scope of the Bill C-3 amendments. It is important to note that the government has not pre-determined or pre-defined the agenda or questions in terms of subject-matters dealing with registration, membership and citizenship.

Accordingly, the Assembly of First Nations, the Native Women's Association of Canada, the National Association of Friendship Centres, the Métis National Council and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples are leading activities under the process at the national level. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada will provide funding support for the planning, organization and implementation of activities with their respective membership. In addition, the Department will work with regional First Nations organizations who are interested in leading activities under the process with their constituencies.

The exploratory process is designed to be inclusive by encouraging the participation of First Nations, Métis and other Aboriginal groups, organizations and individuals at the national, regional and local community levels. This includes the participation of national, provincial/territorial, regional First Nations organizations, Métis and other Aboriginal organizations, Treaty First Nations and Nation groups, Tribal Councils, First Nations governments and communities, Métis communities, First Nations individuals living on and off reserve, Métis individuals and other interested parties.

For more information on the exploratory process and related activities being led by First Nations and other Aboriginal organizations, visit the following links:

- [Assembly of First Nations](#)
- [Métis National Council](#)
- [Congress of Aboriginal Peoples](#)
- [National Association of Friendship Centres](#)
- [Native Women's Association of Canada](#)