



**PRESS RELEASE  
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## **First Nations Working Together to Protect and Revitalize Their Languages**

**Wendake, September 19, 2023** – The Regional Committee on First Nations Languages is proud to organize the first-ever Forum on First Nations Language Rights in Quebec, an historic event to be held on September 19 and 20 at the Manoir du Lac Delage. This initiative is an important part of the Committee's commitment of recognizing and respecting the rights of First Nations peoples with regard to their language and culture. It is worth noting that the forum is also supported by multiple First Nations commissions and regional organizations.

The forum aims to mobilize resources and promote knowledge-sharing among First Nations about their inherent rights, including language rights. Grand Chiefs, Chiefs and elected officials of First Nations governments, as well as several directors of different commissions and organizations will have a unique opportunity to share their vision for the protection and revitalization of languages.

The forum also aims to highlight the impacts of language policies, to raise awareness among actors in the language domain of the importance of working on solutions and taking concerted action. First Nations languages and jurisdiction over these languages belongs to First Nations and must be respected.

“Assimilation policies and residential schools have caused significant damage to our languages. As UNESCO has revealed on an international scale, Indigenous languages in Quebec and Labrador are under threat of extinction. We must not only revitalize and promote them, but also defend them against Quebec’s language policies,” says Sipi Flamand, Chief of the Atikamekw Council of Manawan and the leader of the Indigenous languages file at the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL).

“Our languages are linked to our cultures, our identity and our ceremonies. They communicate our worldviews, our perspectives, our values and our ancestral knowledge. It is our duty to protect them for future generations,” declares Sarah Cleary, coordinator of the Regional Committee on First Nations Languages.

For more information on the Forum on First Nations Language Rights in Quebec or on the Regional Committee on First Nations Languages, please visit [www.firstnationslanguages.ca](http://www.firstnationslanguages.ca) or contact the Committee at the address below.

**About the Regional Committee on First Nations Languages**

The Regional Committee on First Nations Languages was created in 2020 by the AFNQL. In support of and in collaboration with First Nations, the Committee's mission is to contribute to the survival and revitalization of Indigenous languages. The Committee's mandates are to mobilize and inform First Nations on the issues affecting their languages and to support them in defending them.

**About the AFNQL**

The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador is a regional political organization that brings together the 43 chiefs of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador. For more information, visit the FNEC website at [www.apnql.com](http://www.apnql.com).

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