



**PRESS RELEASE  
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**Musée national de l'histoire du Québec: The government of Quebec must recognize the place of First Nations in history**

**Wendake, May 3, 2024** – The First Nations Education Council (FNEC) decries the Quebec government's lack of consultation with First Nations organizations.

On April 25th, the government of Quebec announced its intention to create the Musée national de l'histoire du Québec (MNHQ). During the press conference, Premier Legault made comments that we find regrettable, such as "I think it's important to start with Champlain, at the very beginning, to show how hard it was to survive in North America...", which ignores the fact that this land has historically been inhabited by our Peoples.

We also deplore comments made by the lead historian Éric Bédard of Université TÉLUQ, who asserted "They say that history begins with writing, and before history it's prehistory. Perhaps Indigenous people are a little of the prehistory of Quebec." These comments do not take into account the common past shared by First Nations and the nation of Quebec, and thus undermine efforts to pave the way for reconciliation.

The FNEC is currently working on a portal to modernize the content of teaching materials in provincial schools, with substantial financial support from Quebec's ministry of education. The April 25<sup>th</sup> announcement is a troubling one for First Nations communities.

"It's frustrating and disappointing that the Quebec government systematically ignores the presence of First Nations, which dates back millennia. Long before the arrival of the colonizers, our First Nations ancestors occupied the area and lived in their villages, including Stadacona, on the site of present-day Quebec City. It is unacceptable that the Musée national de l'histoire du Québec fails to reflect this historical presence, and I therefore call on the government to rectify the situation and include First Nations in this museum," added Rémy Vincent, Grand Chief of the Huron-Wendat Nation and member of the FNEC.

"This mindset is totally opposite to the mindset of the original people, our ancestors, who not only healed these sick people that came to our shores, but happily shared the bounty of our resources with them. This museum is a blatant example of this mind set," explained John Martin, Gesgapegiag Mi'gmaq First Nation councillor and FNEC Chiefs Committee member.

"Our history is intimately linked to that of the Québécois, with whom we have shared this territory for several centuries. However, it's reductive to think that we only belong to prehistory. We've been here for a very long time, and we're proud of it. We're part of the past, of course, but to assert that the history of Quebec territory only began with the arrival of Samuel de Champlain is inaccurate. I'm reaching out to Premier Legault and the team at the new Musée national de

l'histoire du Québec so that people can understand the importance we have had and continue to have in the development of Quebec and the First Nations," stated Denis Gros-Louis, FNEC General Director.

**About the FNEC**

The FNEC is an association of 22 First Nations of Quebec that has been working for more than 38 years to realize the right of First Nations to exercise their full jurisdiction over education through the establishment of a comprehensive and adequately resourced education system designed and managed according to their values and culture. For more information, visit [www.cepn-fnec.com](http://www.cepn-fnec.com).

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