

# Draft Political Accord

Revised May 29, 2015

1. WHEREAS the First Nations represented by the Chiefs-in-Assembly (hereinafter “the First Nations”) and the Government of Ontario (hereinafter “Ontario”) wish to move forward together in a spirit of respectful co-existence and with a view to revitalizing the treaty relationship;
2. AND WHEREAS the First Nations exist as self-governing Indigenous Nations and Peoples with their own governments, cultures, languages, traditions, customs and territories;
3. AND WHEREAS the Ontario provincial Crown’s jurisdiction and legal obligations are determined by the Canadian constitutional framework, which includes the common law and treaties entered into between First Nations and the Crown;
4. AND WHEREAS the First Nations and Ontario recognize the importance of strong First Nations governments in achieving a better quality of life for First Nations and creating a better future for First Nations children and youth; and
5. WHEREAS this Accord expresses the political commitment of the First Nations and Ontario and will guide our positive working relationship. It is not intended to impact the interpretation of the rights, legal obligations or jurisdiction of the First Nations or Ontario.

NOW THEREFORE the First Nations and Ontario agree:

1. That First Nations have an inherent right to self-government and that the relationship between Ontario and the First Nations must be based upon respect for this right. An inherent right to self-government may be given legal effect by specific rights recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, or through negotiated agreements and legislation;
2. To build upon and link to existing bilateral or other community-led initiatives established between First Nations and Ontario;
3. To host a meeting, at least twice per year, between the leadership of the Political Confederacy and the Premier and an agenda item which will include the joint assessment on the progress on the identified priorities and issues;
4. To work together to identify and address common priorities and issues, that will include, but are not limited to, the treaty relationship, resource benefits and revenue sharing and jurisdictional matters involving First Nations and Ontario; and
5. To work to resolve key challenges and impasses that impact the parties, including but not limited to, exploring the potential for the use of alternative dispute resolution processes.