FACTSHEET 3/8

Actions to Recognize and Respect the Rights of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples

"We protect ourselves and others."
(Indigenous person living in a camp)

A. Recognize, respect and protect the distinct rights of Indigenous people in all contacts with encampment residents.

B. Recognize their rights to self-determination and self-governance and cease applying colonial regulations and laws to control or criminalize them.

C. Work with local Métis, Inuit and First Nations governments to design and implement housing solutions that reflect self-governance and community-specific needs.

D. Recognize that First Nations, Inuit and Métis people may have a strong desire to avoid interactions with colonial systems that have been historically discriminatory and oppressive (e.g., police, emergency shelters and health care facilities).

E. Recognize the systemic oppressions that have undermined the confidence of Indigenous people in colonial institutions and practices.

- 👉 **Example:** Hire more Indigenous workers to support Indigenous people living in encampments, and ensure the adoption of cultural safety in all activities.

F. Implement the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the calls to justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.[1]

G. Ensure that the meaningful engagement with Indigenous people living in encampments is Indigenous led to promote genuine dialogue guided by "mutual respect, good faith and the sincere desire to reach agreement."

H. Work with Indigenous entities to co-develop engagement processes with Indigenous people, particularly Indigenous individuals living in the encampment, to ensure that the processes recognize Indigenous rights, are culturally appropriate and result in meaningful engagement.

- 👉 **Example:** Collaborate with local friendship centres and other Indigenous-led groups that provide essential services and a safe and secure environment to the Indigenous population.

I. Engage with representatives chosen by Indigenous individuals in the encampment, in accordance with their own procedures and practices.

J. Work with higher orders of government to ensure sufficient funding assistance for urban Indigenous populations.

K. Provide resources to ensure the meaningful participation Indigenous people living in encampments.

L. Respect and implement Indigenous protocols and decision-making processes in responding to encampments inhabited by Indigenous people.

- 👉 **Example:** Facilitate the visits of Elders to the tent city as often as possible to talk about traditional medicines and well-being, and enable Indigenous people living in encampments to have Sacred Fires. Elders should be people trusted by the people living in encampments and ideally come from the host First Nation.

  For many First Nations, it is appropriate to offer tobacco when meeting with Elders, but it is important to research and understand the Indigenous protocols in your area. Elders should also be offered a stipend to cover travel and other costs.

M. Ensure Indigenous-led housing solutions by financing and endorsing Indigenous organizations, such as friendship centres, to be key actors in encampment responses.

N. Ensure that municipal policies distinctly acknowledge and address the housing and homelessness needs of urban Indigenous populations independently from on-reserve initiatives.

1. In particular, implement the housing-related recommendations in Section 4 - Calls for Justice for All Governments: Human Security.