

This solidarity statement has been developed through collaboration among some of our Indigenous students and non-Indigenous allies within the Network.

The Atlantic Indigenous Mentorship Network (Atlantic-IMN) is a regional network that offers support to Indigenous post-secondary students and early career researchers pursuing Indigenous health research and health professional programs. The current discrimination and racism taking place within the Atlantic region regarding Mi'kmaw fishers and Mi'kmaw fishing rights calls for all of us to gather and stand together. We stand in solidarity with Mi'kmaw fishers and community members exercising their treaty rights and fishing for their livelihoods.

The Atlantic-IMN, with other solidarity groups and communities, broadly seeks to challenge colonial systems of oppression and systemic racism that endanger the health of communities in Mi'kma'ki. We recognize Mi'kma'ki as the unceded, unsundered lands of the Mi'kmaw Nation. It is our responsibility as Treaty people to speak out and address injustices against the Mi'kmaw Nation, and to elevate the voices of the community members who are calling for action and support.

Mi'kmaw inherent rights to fish are guaranteed by the Peace & Friendship Treaties, are affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada in R v. Marshall and are protected by Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. The Mi'kmaw Nation have a sacred and inherent self-determined right to govern their resources. Traditional harvesting, including fishing, is an inherent right protected by Treaties, recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada, and affirmed in the Canadian Constitution.

We condemn the violence and racism with which the exercise of Mi'kmaw inherent rights and treaty rights are being met. The intentional destruction of Indigenous food systems, interference with economic participation, damage to personal property, denial of Indigenous sovereignty, and the spreading false and misleading information are abhorrent tools of colonization. These actions are infringing on Mi'kmaw human rights and the wellness of all in Mi'kma'ki.

The Atlantic-IMN is in solidarity with Mi'kmaw fishers and community members. We celebrate their resilience and support the Sipekne'katik Mi'kmaw Nation's call for the federal Department of Fisheries and Ocean Minister Bernadette Jordan, Premier of Nova Scotia Stephen McNeil, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and the RCMP to protect Mi'kmaw rights and safety. We are also in solidarity with all Mi'kmaw communities asserting their inherent rights to harvesting for livelihoods.

Wejgwapesultieg najiwsg'tieg - We have a right to go fishing.

