



Blackfoot Confederacy Chiefs Welcome Premier Wab Kinew's Comments on Duty to Consult

Mohkinstsis (Calgary, AB), Blackfoot Territory – May 26, 2026 – The Blackfoot Confederacy Chiefs welcome the comments made by Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, during the closing press conference of the Western Premiers' Meeting in Kananaskis, Alberta.

Premier Kinew directly challenged Alberta Premier Danielle Smith's position on the duty to consult First Nations following the recent Alberta Court of King's Bench decision in May 2026, which struck down a citizen-led Alberta independence referendum petition. The Court found that Alberta and the petition organizer failed to properly consult First Nations.

During the May 26, 2026 press conference, Premier Smith called the ruling "anti-democratic" and said the Court "erred in judgment." Premier Kinew responded that the duty to consult belongs to the Alberta government and cannot be shifted to citizen petition gatherers. The Blackfoot Confederacy Chiefs welcome Premier Kinew's comments and his clear affirmation that potential impacts to Treaty rights must trigger proper consultation with First Nations. A potential international border through Alberta would clearly affect First Nations rights, including hunting, fishing, harvesting, movement, lands, jurisdiction, and the Treaty relationship with the Crown.

The Blackfoot Confederacy Chiefs also acknowledge Premier Kinew's call to focus on cooperation, economic development, pipelines, Churchill, LNG, and northern trade corridors instead of referendum politics. Canada's future cannot be advanced by bypassing First Nations. It must be built through proper consultation, Treaty respect, and Nation to Nation engagement. First Nations are not stakeholders in these matters. First Nations are Treaty partners with inherent rights, jurisdiction, and responsibilities to the land, water, resources, and future generations.

Proper consultation with the Chiefs of Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 is not a courtesy. It is a constitutional obligation. It must be early, direct, meaningful, and led through proper First Nations leadership. The Blackfoot Confederacy Chiefs continue to call on the Government of Alberta to respect Blackfoot Treaty 7, uphold its constitutional duties, and engage directly with First Nations Chiefs before advancing any proposal that may impact Treaty rights, First Nations jurisdiction, or the future of this province.

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