



## The Salvation Army Response to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Truth and Reconciliation Resolution #48)

The Salvation Army in Canada and Bermuda recognizes our responsibility to reconcile with Indigenous peoples. We realize reconciliation is an ongoing process that acknowledges our past with Indigenous peoples, reframes our current relationships, and works toward a future based on dignity and trust.

The Salvation Army is committed to developing and implementing a plan of action in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action. We will be intentional in responding to each of the appropriate Calls to Action including:

- 48. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*
- 49. Repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery
- 59. Educating congregations
- 60. Educating clergy and denominational leaders

### Call to Action #48:

As a framework for reconciliation, we affirm the principles, norms and standards of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

We are committed to:

1. Ensuring that our institutions, policies, programs and practices uphold the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
2. Respecting Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination, including encouraging them to maintain their own cultural, religious and linguistic practices.
3. Continuing dialogue and education within our organization and communities about the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* reflects and upholds international human rights law as previously articulated in the *Charter* of the United Nations and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. The rights articulated in this declaration are not new or exclusive rights for Indigenous peoples. The Indigenous rights articulated are recognized as minimum standards "for the survival, dignity and well-being of the Indigenous peoples of the world" (Article 43).

The Salvation Army seeks to promote the dignity of all people “regardless of race, colour, creed, sex or age,”<sup>1</sup> which affirms Article 2 of the declaration. We affirm the dignity of Indigenous peoples (Article 1). “As an international Christian movement with an acute social conscience, The Salvation Army is called to a mission of service that provides dignity and respect for all.”<sup>2</sup>

We agree to be guided by the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* through:

- A. Accessibility:** We believe that everyone should have access to basic rights, such as nutritious food, health care, education and economic opportunity.<sup>3</sup> Identifying obstacles and seeking solutions is imperative to ensuring human rights are upheld.
- B. Building Trust:** Developing relationships of mutual respect with Indigenous peoples and groups is foundational. We will attempt to accomplish this by:
  - 1. Celebrating the Indigenous presence and expression within our organization.
  - 2. Engaging in effective and ongoing partnerships with Indigenous communities and organizations.
  - 3. Maintaining our commitment to reconciliation and walking in truth and accountability with Indigenous peoples.
- C. Awareness and Education:** We are committed to:
  - 1. Increasing awareness and education of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* through various presentation formats.
  - 2. Continuing to foster attitudes and values upholding human rights.
- D. Leadership Development:** We will continue developing Indigenous leaders within our organization to provide guidance and leadership for Indigenous peoples.
- E. Promoting Women’s Equality:** In our history as an organization, The Salvation Army has upheld and promoted the equality of women. We will continue to address the particular needs of Indigenous women by:
  - 1. Continuing to promote and maintain women’s rights.
  - 2. Offering ongoing support with Indigenous women experiencing violence.

As we seek to be a transforming influence in our communities, The Salvation Army is committed to the ongoing work of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The Calls to Action reflect our willingness and commitment to seek justice and dignity for all people.

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1 <http://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/E4E2D629AF94769680256D4E0041547D> Accessed March 2015.  
2 *Why Dignity Matters.* <http://www.salvationarmy.ca/blog/why-dignity-matters/> Accessed March 2015.  
3 *Dignity Q & A.* <http://www.salvationarmy.ca/dignity/dignity-questions/> Accessed March 2015.