



## **Treaty Land Entitlement Negotiations: Background on the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations**

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) represents 74 First Nations in Saskatchewan. The Federation is committed to honouring the spirit and intent of the Treaties as well as the promotion, protection and implementation of Treaties that were made with the First Nations more than a century ago.

The FSIN of today has its roots in the Federation of

Nations people in Saskatchewan, concerns were raised regarding the non-profit status of the organization. It was felt it did not accurately reflect the organization’s changing nature or mandate.

As a result a massive re-organization of the FSI was undertaken. On April 16, 1982, Saskatchewan Chiefs agreed to form Canada’s first Indian Legislative Assembly. The FSI was no longer a non-profit organization but a Federation of Nations and its name was changed to reflect this by the addition of the word “Nations.” This unification of First Nations in Saskatchewan put the First Nations in a better position to negotiate a settlement of the Treaty land debt.

For First Nations Treaty land is fundamental to their identity and their survival. However, for generations First Nations did not receive the land they were promised under the Treaties.

The FSIN’s position was that the federal government needed to uphold the honour of the Crown by fulfilling the Treaty promises for land in a way that honoured the spirit and intent of the Treaties. This would mean both that the land would have to be productive land that could contribute to First Nations’ economic foundations, as well as being of sufficient amount to meet the current needs of the First Nations based on increases in population since the time the Treaties were entered into. At the start of the negotiations both the federal and provincial governments had rejected the Saskatchewan Agreement and wanted to go back to using the population as of the date of first survey and some First Nations groups had joined together to commence a law suit to force governments to comply with the Agreement.

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Saskatchewan Indians (FSI). The FSI organization was created in 1958 through a combination of the three major existing First Nation organizations in Saskatchewan - the Saskatchewan Treaty Protection Association, the Association of Saskatchewan Indians and the League of Indians of Western Canada.

Despite the progress that the FSI was making on behalf of First

### **Position of FSIN**

For First Nations the Treaties are sacred and spiritual agreements, representing an alliance with the Government that cannot be broken. From the First Nation perspective the Treaties were entered into on a “nation-to-nation” basis to set out the relationship between the First Nations and the British Crown and later the Canadian Government.

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