

## Glossary of Treaty Terms

(Adapted from *Canada in the Making*) <[http://www.canadiana.org/citm/glossaire/glossaire1\\_e.html](http://www.canadiana.org/citm/glossaire/glossaire1_e.html)>

**Aboriginal Peoples:** A collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants. The Canadian constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal People: Indians (commonly referred to as First Nations), Métis and Inuit. These are three distinct peoples with unique histories, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. More than one million people in Canada identify themselves as an Aboriginal Person, according to the 2006 Census.

**Aboriginal Rights:** The rights of Aboriginal People that originate from their culture and ownership of land and resources that existed prior to European contact and occupation. How these rights are to be expressed in today's world is currently being worked out through negotiations and court cases.

**Band:** The name given to village-size groups of Aboriginal People in the Indian Act. Also the fundamental legal unit for Canadian Aboriginal people.

**Cede:** Concede, give up, surrender or relinquish to the control of another.

**Colonialism:** The practice of creating colonies so one group can control another group by settling in their territory. A colony refers to settlement in a new territory that remains tied or loyal to the parent state.

**First Nations:** A more specific term than Aboriginal Peoples or First Peoples, usually refers to Indigenous peoples in Canada and their descendants, and does not refer to the Inuit or Métis.

**Imperialism:** Taking control of other people's lands by war or peaceful occupation—a practice of numerous countries around the globe throughout history, but particularly strong during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries amongst European countries. Britain and France both had imperial interests in Canada. After the British defeated the French they extended their control across the continent and displaced Aboriginal People.

**Indian:** The term originally used by Europeans to describe Aboriginal Peoples in Canada. Today this is a legal term which usually refers to a “status Indian.” Now the terms “Aboriginal People” or First Nations or “Indigenous People” are more commonly used.

**Indian Agent:** A Canadian government official, appointed through the Department of Indian Affairs, to exercise government authority and protection over particular Indian bands.

**Indigenous People:** Another term used to describe Aboriginal or First Nations peoples. This term describes any ethnic group of people who inhabit a geographical region with which they have the earliest known historical connection.

**Métis:** A term used to describe people of mixed native and European origin, and comes from an old French word meaning "mixed." Métis people have existed wherever European and Aboriginal people intermarried, especially along the St. Lawrence and in the west. The Métis are one of three recognized Aboriginal peoples in Canada, along with the Indians (or First Nations) and Inuit. Approximately one third of all Aboriginal People in Canada identify themselves as Métis, and the 2006 census data shows that the Métis population was 389,785 people.

**Numbered Treaties, (or Post-Confederation Treaties):** Eleven treaties signed between the federal government and the various Aboriginal groups of the Prairies and Northern Canada over a period of four decades between the late 1800s and early 1900s. As part of the treaties Aboriginal People exchanged all of their rights to large tracts of land (and resources) in return for reserve land and various forms of government assistance.

**Ratify:** To formally agree to a document, such as a treaty.

**Reserve:** Land which is owned by the Federal government, but is set aside for First Nations to live on and benefit from after the signing of treaties. There are over 600 reserves in Canada currently.

**Rupert's Land:** All of the land with rivers that drain into Hudson's Bay including parts of Québec and Ontario, all of Manitoba, most of Saskatchewan and southern Alberta, and parts of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. This part of North America was granted by the English king to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670. In 1869, the company sold the territory back to the British Government, and in 1870 it was given to Canada.

**Status Indians:** Refers to Aboriginal Peoples who belong to an Indian Band and are listed on the federal government's Indian Registry. Status Indians have the right to live on reserves and have access to services secured by treaties or other agreements. Non-status Indians are those who are of Indian ancestry and identity, but have lost their legal status as Indians either voluntarily or through marriage with a non-status Indian (for example, a white person). The laws defining Indian status were changed to be less discriminatory in 1985.

**Treaty:** An agreement usually made between two nations and between Aboriginal Groups and national governments. In Canada treaties were made between Aboriginal Groups who were offered small amounts of land, cash or goods (and sometimes services like education or health care) in exchange for transferring ownership of their traditional territory to the federal government.