

# Media Update

For Immediate Release: August 31, 2007  
Six Nations Council



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## Six Nations Matrimonial Real Property Law (MRP) to be Developed

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(Ohsweken – August 31, 2007) In March 2007 the federal government indicated its intention to again impose federal legislation on First Nations across Canada. This legislation will deal with the Matrimonial Real Property (MRP) issue. Their stated reason for introducing such legislation is what they call a gap in legislation because neither the federal, provincial or First Nations have laws that apply to real property on reserves when spouses separate or divorce. Real property is immovable or fixed to the land and usually includes the family or matrimonial home.

When Canada announced its intention to again pass laws affecting First Nations, Six Nations saw this as a violation of the Two Row Treaty with the Crown and decided to resist this effort by Canada to pass this law by lobbying in Ottawa. Six Nations takes the position that we were not consulted, as is required by the Supreme Court.

Six Nations Council has also taken the position that family law is a Six Nation's jurisdiction and has decided to exercise jurisdiction over the area of family law by passing its own MRP law. In 1996 the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) recognized First Nations jurisdiction in the area of family law and stated First Nations do not require the consent of other governments to exercise their jurisdiction.

Six Nations Elected Council announced today that they will undertake to initiate a law on Matrimonial Real Property with the Six Nations community. One other First Nation in Ontario has already enacted its own MRP law under its own inherent authority. Council has formed an MRP Planning Committee consisting of Councilors, staff and hired a consultant to help develop the law.

Six Nations Council will begin to hold community meetings in September to develop its MRP law. A schedule of meetings will be planned and a draft document will be developed and refined responding to community input. Notices of all upcoming meetings will be posted and published in local newspapers.

The first meeting is scheduled for September 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at the Community Hall.

For background information on MRP please pick up an MRP Fact Sheet at Council Office.

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Copies of this Release are available from:  
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