



Hiawatha First Nation

The Right Honourable Mark Carney
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, On, K1A 0A2
Via email@ mark.carney@parl.gc.ca

February 9, 2026

Re: Open Letter to the Prime Minister of Canada Regarding the Public Address Given at the World Economic Forum in Davos

Aaniin Prime Minister Carney,

Boozhoo. Atik Dodem, Ajijak Dodem, Mgizi Kwe Ndishnikaz, Laurie Nooswin, Minoomingaming Ndoonjaba, Michi Saagiig Anishinaabe Kwe Ndaaw, Gimma Hiawatha. I am from the Hoof Clan, related to the Crane Clan on my mother's side. My Anishinaabe Kwe name is Eagle Woman. My English name is Laurie. I am from the Mississauga Nation and Chief of our community, Hiawatha First Nation.

I wish to acknowledge and commend your address at the World Economic Forum in Davos. Your remarks were delivered with clarity and confidence, and they presented Canada as a principled and forward-looking nation on the global stage.

That said, upon careful reflection, I must openly express our truth as one of the many Sovereign Nations within Canada, and as a First Nation. The values and narratives articulated in your speech do not fully align with the realities experienced by Sovereign Nations and First Nations Peoples in this country. While Canada is often presented internationally as unified and inclusive, this portrayal does not consistently reflect the nation-to-nation relationships, treaty obligations, and ongoing systemic inequities that shape our lived realities. This discrepancy between international representation and domestic truth warrants direct and thoughtful consideration.

At Davos, you told the world: *"You cannot live within the lie of mutual benefit through integration when integration becomes the source of your subordination."* First Nations in Canada have been living that lie for generations.

You also warned that *"middle powers must act together because if we're not at the table, we're on the menu."*

For First Nations, this is not rhetoric. It is policy. It is practice. It is lived experience.

We are not at the table where decisions about our lands, waters and economies are made. As a result, our territories are treated as the menu, allocated, leased, regulated and exploited without our consent, while we are invited afterward to manage the fallout.

We were told that integration would bring prosperity, security and shared benefit. Instead, it became the mechanism of our dispossession of our lands, our laws, our languages and our

economies. Integration, as imposed by the Canadian state, did not lift us up. It subordinated us. It demanded our participation without power and our consent without control.

You warned that *“a country that cannot feed itself, fuel itself, or defend itself has few options.”*

Yet Canada systematically denies First Nations the very capacity to do those things. Our communities live under long-term boil-water advisories in one of the most water-rich countries on Earth. We are blocked from developing our own energy resources while projects cross our territories without consent. Our food systems were dismantled through policy, land theft and regulation, and then we are blamed for the dependency those actions created.

You said, *“That’s building a strong domestic economy. It should be every government’s immediate priority.”*

Then this reality must be named plainly, the most fundamental ingredient of any economy is a land base, one rich in resources. Those resources are harvested, extracted and grown from that land. They generate work, commodities and revenue. That revenue builds a workforce and tax base that funds roads, infrastructure, schools and hospitals. That workforce then requires services and goods, expanding the economy further and creating more businesses and jobs. This is not abstract theory. It is the foundation of Canada’s economy.

That land base came from Indigenous Peoples. As stated by Lake Huron Regional Chief, Scott McLeod Shabogesic, “the Indigenous Nations of this land signed treaties to share our territories so that Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples could prosper together from its richness. Instead, our Peoples were raped, murdered, removed, confined to reserves, thrown into residential schools and jails, marginalized from the economic benefits of our own lands and made the poorest Peoples in the country as a result.

So, no matter what job or business one holds in this country, the truth remains, Indigenous Peoples have paid, and continue to pay, for Canada’s economy every single day. No land base means no country. No country means no economy. No economy means no jobs. It is, in fact, that simple.”

You said, *“When the rules no longer protect you, you must protect yourself.”*

For First Nations, the rules have rarely protected us. Treaties are broken as a matter of convenience. Court rulings are delayed, appealed, or ignored until they lose force. International declarations are celebrated abroad and neutralized at home. When we act to protect our lands and waters, we are met not with partnership, but with injunctions, police forces and criminalization.

At Davos, you cautioned against *“a world of fortresses,”* warning it would be *“poorer, more fragile and less sustainable.”*

Prime Minister, Canada has already built a fortress on First Nations lands. Wealth is extracted at scale, while our communities remain systemically underfunded, overcrowded and constrained across all sectors. The fragility you warned the world about is not theoretical. It is manufactured here through policies that prioritize speed and profit over consent, sustainability and justice.

You spoke of *“risk management,” “shared investments in resilience,”* and *“positive-sum complementarities.”*

Yet when First Nations demand revenue sharing, jurisdiction, or equity in projects on our territories, we are told the risk is too high, the timelines too tight and the cost too great. Resilience is demanded of us but rarely invested in with us.

You described Canada as “*principled and pragmatic*,” committed to sovereignty, territorial integrity and human rights.

First Nations ask a simple question, whose sovereignty? Our Nations were sovereign long before Confederation. Our territorial integrity has been systematically eroded. Our human rights are treated as negotiable, conditional, aspirational, but never foundational.

You said Canada engages the world “*with open eyes*,” taking it as it is, not as you wish it to be.

Then apply that clarity at home. See that reconciliation cannot coexist with ongoing land dispossession. That partnership is impossible when free, prior, and informed consent is treated as a procedural checkbox rather than a binding standard. That sovereignty cannot be performed while control is withheld.

At Davos, you warned against “*the performance of sovereignty while accepting subordination*.”

Prime Minister, this is precisely what Canada demands of First Nations, participation without power, consultation without influence, reconciliation without restitution. We are asked to stand politely at the edge of the room while decisions are made and then told we were included.

You called for “*naming reality*.”

So let us name it. Canada speaks the language of values abroad while practicing expediency at home. It champions a rules-based order internationally while treating First Nations rights domestically as obstacles to be managed, delayed or overridden.

You concluded by saying Canada is “*taking a sign out of the window*.”

We urge you to take another sign down, the one that tells the world Canada has moved beyond colonialism while continuing to benefit from it every day.

If Canada truly believes that those not at the table end up on the menu, then it must confront an uncomfortable truth, for far too long, First Nations have been deliberately excluded and consumed.

Anything less than structural change is not leadership. It is, in your own words, the performance of sovereignty while accepting subordination.

Prime Minister, I ask that you reflect on your speech and apply the same clarity in “naming reality” to Canada’s relationship with First Nations Peoples in this country we all call home.

Miigwetch,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Laurie Carr". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chief Laurie Carr
Hiawatha First Nation