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du Québec
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PRESS RELEASE
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Open House Event on First Nations **The First Nations of Quebec are Getting Known and Acknowledged**

Quebec, June 20 2008 – Some hundred people from different sectors of activity, participated today in the « Open House Event on First Nations », organized by the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL) and its regional organizations and commissions. It is the second edition of this awareness initiative which promotes the creation of bonds between the AFNQL and numerous socioeconomic groups of Quebec. « We have the responsibility to bring our realities to the attention of those who share this territory without really knowing us », stated the Chief of the AFNQL, Ghislain Picard, visibly happy about the success of the event.

The large crowd present at this gathering is a clear indication of the interest of Quebec's groups to have a better knowledge of the First Nations and to develop with them alliances that are promising for the future. This interactive and convivial event is a reminder of the intention of the AFNQL to bring together the First Nations, the organizations of the civil society, private enterprises, as well as circles adjoining the communities of the First Nations of Quebec. The invited participants had the opportunity to hear several guest speakers and to have a virtual visit of two communities.

It is therefore through this public activity, aimed at the creation of new alliances with Quebec's organizations that the First Nations of Quebec wanted to celebrate the National Aboriginal Day (June 21). « After 400 years of colonialism, it is necessary to bring to mind the past alliances and to address together, the challenges that await us. Did you know that in Canada, each time there was a case on the rights of aboriginal peoples, Canada behaved as an enemy? Don't you think it's time that Canada changes its policy of confrontation and discrimination? Everyone agrees that the current situation has to change, yet, the governments continue to feed the status quo situation. In order to really change things, we have decided to bypass the governments and to undertake a dialogue directly with the organizations of the Quebec civil society. We are forced to admit that this strategy is effective and helpful », stated Chief Picard.

The Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador is the regional organization which regroups the Chiefs of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador.

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