

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues: North American Region Representative Talking Stick

The Talking Stick

This Talking Stick is carved by Chuck Heit, a Gitksan artist from the Skeena River country in northern British Columbia, Canada. It is 24 inches in length and carved from yellow cedar.

Traditionally Indigenous Peoples have used Talking Sticks as a way of respectfully communicating with each other. Today, along with our traditional ways of communicating, Indigenous Peoples are utilizing technology to communicate amongst ourselves.

It is presented by the North American Region's Indigenous Peoples' Caucus to the North American Representative to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The Talking Stick will remain with the North American Representative to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and will be passed on from representative to representative upon each new appointment.

The first presentation is made to Wilton Littlechild, the outgoing North American representative on February 20, 2008, at the Symposium on the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The second presentation is made from Wilton Littlechild to Tonya Gonnella Frichner, the incoming North American representative to the UNPFII, on February 20, 2008.

Description

The carved components of this Talking Stick represent comparable beliefs of many Indigenous Nations in North America.

Eagle

- This animal represents the Indigenous Peoples of North America, and also represents the Sky. In many Indigenous teachings the Eagle is a symbol of a messenger to the Creator - the carrier of our prayers to the Creator.

4 Faces and 4 Directions - Elder, Youth, Man, Woman

- These faces represent the 4 directions of the Earth - North, South, East, West
- These directions also represent the World
- These faces represent the mutual relationship and harmony between Men, Women, Youth and Elders and between the generations and genders

7 Sided Handle

- The 7 sides represent 7 generations - in everything we do we must be mindful of the impacts on 7 generations
- It also represents the 7 regions representative of the Global Indigenous Caucus and our relationship with Indigenous peoples around the world.

Bentbox

- Is a treasure box which hold cultural treasures from our Ancestors to ourselves inside the box
- Is a 4 sided design: Caretakers of Earth - animals that have responsibilities to the land
 - Frog
 - Beaver
 - Marmot
 - Human



On behalf of the North American Region Indigenous Peoples Caucus, we gratefully acknowledge the BC First Nations Technology Council for sponsoring the commissioning of the Talking Stick. The Technology Council was established in 2002 to improve the quality of life for all First Nations in BC by using technology to preserve language and culture, and provide distance education, tele-health, and economic development opportunities.