

Bob Joseph, president of Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., says he expects there to be a renewed push for the government to implement UNDRIP.

## Renewing attention on the passage of UNDRIP

Bob Joseph, founder and president of Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., said he anticipates there will be renewed calls for the government to enshrine the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into law, as it had promised to in the Throne Speech. Legislation would have been tabled in February, according to CBC, but the rail blockades in solidarity with some Wet'suwet'en demonstrators delayed its rollout.

Mr Joseph said he wants to see politicians of all stripes lend their support to the aspirational document in hopes of moving "more toward the consent model" when it comes to the approval of development projects. UNDRIP includes a clause that calls for "free, prior, and informed consent" from Indigenous people around development projects on their unceded land.

In the post-pandemic recovery, there may be a rush to nance energy and resource projects, and, in turn, an obligation on the part of the government to ensure it has the support it needs from the Indigenous communities affected before it moves forward.

"When you look at Canada, it really is [still] a resource-extraction country," he said, pointing to the country's continued reliance on forestry, mining, oil and gas. "They're going to want to push their attention to those things, and that puts UNDRIP and the truth and reconciliation work that we're going to do, right on a collision course, because they're going to want to do it fast."

For many Indigenous advocates, having UNDRIP in place would go a long way in providing certainty for the industry. In the absence of securing the consent required, energy projects—including most notably, the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project—have experienced numerous legislative hurdles.

"I've always heard [communities] say, 'We're not against development, but it can't be development at all costs. We've got to protect the sh, forests, animals,' so there are ways to

conduct adequate and meaningful consultation,” he said. “In Canadian law, that’s fairly narrowly defined, whereas in [UNDRIP], the guidance is there.”

In an interview with *The Globe and Mail*, former prime minister Brian Mulroney called on the prime minister to implement the recommendations outlined in the 1996 report from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. The commission calls for restorative justice, allowing Indigenous nations to govern their own lands, resources, and affairs while giving more control over education and child welfare.