

## PRESS RELEASE

*For immediate release*

### QUEBEC NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HIGHLIGHTS 25 YEARS OF ABORIGINAL TOURISM

Wendake, April 26, 2017 – Québec Aboriginal Tourism’s (QAT’s) 25 years of active involvement were acknowledged by the Quebec government through a [statement](#) by [Véronique Tremblay](#), Member for Chauveau, at the National Assembly. QAT Board of Directors was welcomed by [Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard](#) for the occasion.

In the presence of [Hon. Julie Boulet](#), Minister of Tourism, [Hon. Geoffrey Kelley](#), Minister responsible for Native Affairs and Véronique Tremblay, the Prime Minister stated that the government will continue to collaborate with the province’s 11 Nations not only in the field of tourism for which there is a strong international demand but also for the economic and social development of the First Nations and Inuit.

Following the example of our ancestors and in keeping with their traditions, QAT President Steeve *Wadohandik* Gros-Louis took the opportunity of this historic and emotional moment to offer a wampum belt to the Prime Minister as a token of mutual respect and appreciation to mark these 25 years of collaboration: *“We receive this recognition with deep emotion and pride for our work in sharing the past, driving present initiatives and building a vision for the future. Tourism is not only an important economic pillar for Aboriginal peoples but it also asserts deep-rooted values that have been defining our entrepreneurs and communities for millennia. This recognition highlights our rich culture, languages and identity.”*

On March 26, Minister of Tourism Hon. Julie Boulet announced the [2017-2020 Tourism Investment Plan](#), which carries a \$70 million funding for tourism development around five key business sectors. Aboriginal tourism is at the heart of these strategies and will contribute to the further development and promotion of Quebec as a destination. On the federal front, the recent appointment of QAT Executive Director Dave Laveau to Destination Canada’s Board of Directors and the announcement of funds allocated for tourism development add to the momentum of our industry which shines strong with authentic traditions and cultures.”

In Quebec, the number of Aboriginal tourism enterprises has more than doubled since the early 2000s. Each year, Aboriginal Quebec welcomes more than a million visitors, sustains about 3,500 jobs and generates around \$169 million in economic benefits.

#### **About QAT**

QAT is the oldest Aboriginal tourism association in Canada and represents around 150 Aboriginal tourism enterprises of the 11 NATIONS. QAT is the sectoral tourism association recognized by the provincial ministry of tourism as the official representative of Aboriginal tourism and by the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador as the services and exchange platform for the development and

promotion of the Aboriginal tourism offer. Dedicated to the marketing of Aboriginal tourism experiences and products, QAT provides the Aboriginal tourism entrepreneurs of Quebec with a representative body that safeguards their interests, supports their development and offers a range of products and services that promote business development, improve business practices and increase their visibility in tourism markets.

In Quebec, the number of Aboriginal tourism enterprises has more than doubled since the early 2000s. Each year, Aboriginal Quebec welcomes more than a million visitors, sustains about 3,500 jobs and generates an estimated \$169 million in economic benefits.

For more information about QAT, visit [www.quebecaboriginal.com](http://www.quebecaboriginal.com).

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*Left to right: QAT Executive Director Dave Laveau , Minister of Tourism Hon. Julie Boulet, QAT Board member Marc Plourde, QAT Board member Brigitte Lalo-Malec, QAT President Steeve Wadohandik Gros-Louis, Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard, Member for Chauveau Véronyque Tremblay, QAT Board member Michelle Picard, , Minister responsible for Native Affairs Hon. Geoffrey Kelley, QAT Board member Robert Lancup and QAT Board member Benoit Audette.*