



Panama City, May, 09th, 2026

Dear Honorable Rechie Valdez,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) as an Indigenous tourism leader and industry partner. I must urge for continued, meaningful federal investment in Indigenous tourism infrastructure across Canada.

ITAC has been far more than a tourism association. It has served as a national connector, capacity builder, and strategic partner, helping Indigenous cultural organizations develop market readiness, visibility, partnerships, and access within the broader tourism ecosystem. This work is essential because Indigenous arts and cultural experiences have historically operated at the margins of the tourism industry despite representing some of the most authentic and sought-after cultural experiences in Canada.

Through its leadership, ITAC helped create pathways for Indigenous organizations, entrepreneurs, artists, and communities to participate more fully in tourism economies while maintaining cultural integrity, community values, and self-determination. Our work has contributed to positioning Indigenous tourism not as a niche offering, but as a vital and growing economic and cultural force within Canada.

The impact of losing ITAC's operational capacity would extend far beyond one organization. It would create a domino effect across the Indigenous tourism sector, affecting artists, cultural workers, entrepreneurs, remote communities, tourism operators, and Indigenous-led cultural spaces that depend on national coordination, advocacy, training, and visibility to remain sustainable and competitive.

At a time when Canada continues to position reconciliation, cultural inclusion, and tourism growth as national priorities, Indigenous tourism organizations should not be left fighting for survival. Sustained investment in Indigenous tourism is an investment in economic reconciliation, cultural sustainability, entrepreneurship, and the long-term prosperity of Indigenous communities across Canada.

I respectfully encourage your office to champion renewed, stable support for ITAC and the Indigenous tourism sector as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gilberto Alemanca". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G".

GILBERTO ALEMANCIA

Executive Director & CEO

Red de Turismo Indígena de Panamá

(REDTURI PANAMA)

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