



TO DESTINATAIRE
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REFERENCE RÉFÉRENCE
SUBJECT OBJET

Memorandum of Understanding with Aboriginal Affairs Commission

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On 20 December, the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei (CTOT) finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with Taiwan's Aboriginal Affairs Commission (AAC). The signing took place as part of a ceremony commemorating the second anniversary of the creation of the AAC, and was attended by over 2,000, including representatives from Canada.

Taiwan's aboriginal population. Taiwan's non-Chinese aboriginals number some 400,000, some 2% of the population. Their numbers are roughly equal to that of the indigenous population of Australia, and a little less than that of New Zealand, both groups of which are better known in Canada. The aboriginal population in Taiwan is enjoying a cultural renaissance, somewhat related to the search for a "Taiwan" identity. Due to recent constitutional amendments, aboriginal voters have seven reserved seats in Taiwan's assembly, all won by the KMT in the recent vote. There is a history of Canadian interaction with Taiwan's aboriginal community. Canadian missionaries such as the 19th century George Mackay were active in improving social conditions among the aboriginal groups in Taiwan.

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MOUs with Taiwan

Agreements with Taiwanese government agencies, the CTOT will be signatory to the MOU. Indian and Northern Affairs will also play a role in programs involving Canadian aboriginal groups, but could not be indicated as an executing agency. All of the MOUs signed thus far with CTOT and Taiwanese agencies are consistent with Canada's objective of developing economic, cultural and people-to-people links with Taiwan. PKE hopes and expects that the MOU with AAC will contribute to economic and cultural promotion activities of Canadian aboriginal groups. We believe the MOU has enhanced and will enhance the image of Canada in Taiwan, at minimal cost.

Cooperative Activities. There are no resource implications for CTOT from this MOU; the AAC is well-funded, and will absorb most of the costs of the annual plan of activity