For Council October 22, 2020

WHEREAS the DSU is located on the unceded and unsurrendered lands of the Mi’kmaq nation and fulfilling our treaty obligations involves supporting our Mi’kmaw and Indigenous members as well as the peoples of this land more broadly; AND

WHEREAS the Mi’kmaw have an inherent right to sovereignty, self-determination, and safety on their territory; AND

WHEREAS the Peace and Friendship Treaties signed between the Mi’kmaq and the British in 1752, 1760, and 1761 included an agreement that the British would not interfere with Mi’kmaw hunting, fishing, and farming, and this agreement was affirmed in 1999 Marshall Decision in the Supreme Court of Canada which stated that Mi’kmaw have the right to earn a “moderate livelihood” through these activities; AND

WHEREAS the failure of Canadian federal governments to respect Mi’kmaw rights and to collaborate on defining “moderate livelihood” led the Sipekne’katik First Nation to launch their own self-governed fishery on September 17, 2020, the 21st anniversary of the Marshall Decision; AND

WHEREAS settler fishers employed by commercial fisheries have responded to this assertion of treaty rights with violence, intimidation, and anti-Indigenous racism, in some cases claiming that their actions are motivated by concern for the environment, conservation, and the preservation of lobster stocks despite significant evidence to discredit this claim; THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the DSU stand wholeheartedly in solidarity with Sipekne’katik First Nation, with the Mi’kmaw asserting their treaty rights, and with the Indigenous people who have been demonstrating and defending these rights despite threats and acts of violence; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the DSU follow the leadership and direction of the Dalhousie Indigenous Student Collective (DISC) in determining the best ways to show support and stand in solidarity on this issue; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the DSU share educational content relating to Mi’kmaw rights and this ongoing situation on social media and encourage members to get informed and to show solidarity; AND

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the DSU condemn the use of “conservation” as an excuse for anti-Indigenous racism and affirm that decolonization and affirming Indigenous sovereignty are necessary actions for countering environmental destruction.