

## PREFACE

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In 2003, the State of the Federation conference focused on the reconfiguration of Aboriginal-state relations in the federation and examined their adequacy. The conference organizer and editor of the resulting proceedings, Dr Michael Murphy, was concerned with the many challenges confronting Canadian federalism as a result of the disjuncture between the institutions and policies that governed these relations and what one of the editors of the present volume describes as “the rapidly changing Aboriginal reality on the ground.” In the subsequent decade, the reality on the ground continued to evolve as the Aboriginal population grew more rapidly than that of other Canadians and changed both socially and economically. Also, the resource boom experienced during those years exacerbated conflicts over land tenure and ownership, while a series of Supreme Court decisions affirmed both the duty to consult and the recognition of Aboriginal title. Clearly, in the decade since our last conference on reconfiguring Aboriginal-state relations, the pressures on the institutions and policies governing those relations have continued unabated. The issue is how, and to what extent, they have adapted.

It was not difficult, therefore, when then-IIGR-director André Juneau was considering possible topics for the 2013 State of the Federation conference, to conclude that a renewed discussion focusing on Aboriginal-state relationships was required. Moreover, it was a necessity given additional urgency in late 2012 and early 2013 by the activities of the “Idle No More” movement, which evidenced the growing impatience, especially among younger Aboriginal people, with the slow pace of change.

André Juneau consulted with Martin Papillon, then at the University of Ottawa, and a leading expert on Aboriginal governments and their relations with other governments. Professor Papillon not only agreed on the need and timeliness of such a conference but also agreed with André’s suggestion that he take the lead in organizing the 2013 State of the Federation conference and co-editing the resulting volume. Both André and I would like to say how very much we appreciate the excellent job he has done both as organizer and editor. I would also like to express my appreciation for the contributions that André continues to make to the institute in his new role as fellow.

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Interim director, IIGR

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