

## Political Structure of the Iroquois

### Political system

- highly democratic
- meetings open to anyone
- formed a confederacy (a loose political union) to ensure peace

### Iroquois Confederacy / Iroquois League

- Also known as the League of Five Nations
- formed by Deganawidah and Hiawatha
- made up of the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida and Mohawk
- Loose union of tribes in which each tribe had its own (S.C.O.O.M) identity and laws but all came together in matters of common concern
- First representative democracy in the Americas

### Great Binding Law / Great Law of Peace

- Reasons for uniting
  - peace
  - protection from outsiders
  - control the fur trade
- Written law recorded in wampum.



Governing Body - Grand Council (Council of 50 Sachems)

- Each tribe sent representative chiefs to a meeting
- Met once a year on Onondaga land to discuss common problems (war, fur-trade, treaties)

Role of women

- Clan mother chose chiefs, could remove chiefs
- Acted as advisers

