MOHAWK NATION
OF GRAND RIVER
SECRETARIAT

BOOK XXI OF THE REGISTER'S BOOKS

Contracts of the Nation

The Nation's smart contracts: one record read by people and carried out by the Register — signing in order, clauses that act by themselves, disputes, and the record kept — measured against the world's benchmarks, with an expert's questions answered.

One of the National Books of the Mohawk Nation of Grand River.

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Contracts of the Nation

Book XXI of the Register’s books

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SECTION 1

What a contract of the Nation is

One record that people read, sign, and the Register carries out.

For residents, officers, and their advisers.

Its colour: **Forest**

THE IDEA

One record, read and executed

A contract of the Nation is a single record — its parties, its terms, its clauses — kept in one exact form. People read it; the parties sign it; the Register carries out its clauses. Because what is read, what is signed and what is carried out are the same record, there can be no gap between what was agreed and what is done. This is the model called the **Ricardian contract**, after the cryptographer Ian Grigg, who described it in 1996.

A worked example

Part	In the contract “Supply of cedar posts for the river lots”
Record Code	CTR001-261025-000003
Parties	Mary SMOKE; Thomas GREEN
Terms	Thomas GREEN supplies forty cedar posts, cut and peeled, by the date below; the Resident pays as the clauses set out
Clause 1 — payment	Mary SMOKE pays Thomas GREEN GR$125.00 by 28 October 2026
Clause 2 — milestone	Thomas GREEN delivers the forty posts by 30 October 2026
Clause 3 — condition	Takes effect when the Register issues GZT001-261025-000005 (the cedar lot registered)
Clause 4 — term	Runs until 25 October 2027, then ends
Fingerprint	The SHA-256 of all of the above, exactly as kept — what each party signs

SECTION 2

Signing

How each signature is made, and why the order of signing is part of the proof.

Its colour: **Forest**

SIGNING

	Step
1	Each party opens the contract from their own private link, and reads it
2	To sign, they tick that they have read this version and agree to be bound; type their name as the contract gives it; and sign with finger or mouse
3	Their signature’s fingerprint is worked out from: the contract’s fingerprint | the signature before theirs | who they are in it | their typed name | the time | the fingerprint of their drawn signature
4	The first party’s signature covers the contract; each later one covers the one before — so no signature can be lifted out, or the order changed, without it showing
5	When the last party signs, the contract is sealed, goes on the Ledger, and carries its Edge Mark

RULE A revision is a new version: every signature given to the old one is cleared. No one is ever bound to words they did not see.

Before signing

Any party may send the contract to someone for review — a lawyer, a relative, an Elder — who can read it but not sign it, and whose comments come back to that party alone; or ask the drafter for a change.

SECTION 3

Clauses that act

How the Register carries out a contract’s clauses.

Its colour: **Forest**

CLAUSES

A payment

How to read the diagram: each box is a standing — Pending, Due, Marked paid, Met and Overdue — and each arrow is what moves it on to the next. The boxes drawn with a heavier border (Met and Overdue) are where it settles.



Clause	Acts by itself when	And then
Payment	Its date nears (7 days); the date passes	Marked due; marked overdue; both parties told
Milestone	Its date passes without it done; 14 days more	Marked overdue; then missed
Condition	The Register issues or publishes the named record	In effect at once: the Register is the contract’s oracle
Term	Its end date passes	Ended — or renewed for the same period, if agreed

WHY An “oracle” is whatever tells a contract that something happened in the world. Most systems must trust an outside source; the Nation’s contracts take their facts from its own Register, whose every act is on the Ledger.

SECTION 4

Disputes and records

When parties disagree, and what is kept.

Its colour: **Forest**

DISPUTES

The words govern. If the parties disagree about what a clause means, or whether it was met, the matter goes to the Court of the Nation, or — if both consent — to a restorative circle. The Register’s record of each clause, each step and each signature is evidence before the Court.

Every step — drafted, sent for review, a change asked, revised, each signature, sealed, each clause falling due, met, overdue or missed — is a Ledger entry. A private contract appears there only as fingerprints; a public one in full.

SECTION 5

How we compare

The benchmarks.

Its colour: **Forest**

BENCHMARKS

How we compare

Benchmark	What they do	What the Nation does
Ricardian contracts (Grigg, 1996)	One document, readable by people and by machines, its fingerprint signed	The model itself
Ethereum smart contracts	Code on a public blockchain, executed by the network; fees for every action	Clauses carried out by the Register; no fees; no cryptocurrency; plain words govern, not code
The Accord Project	Open templates for legal contracts with machine-executable clauses	Clauses of four kinds now; templates are the next step
DocuSign and other e-signature services	Signatures with an audit trail, held by the service	Signatures chained in order, on the Nation's own Ledger, anchored in Bitcoin
UNCITRAL Model Laws on Electronic Commerce (1996) and Signatures (2001)	A contract is not denied effect because it is electronic	The contracts meet their tests: the signer identified, their intent shown, the record kept unaltered

The standards

Standard	For
UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce (1996)	Electronic records and contracts
UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Signatures (2001)	Electronic signatures
UN Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (2005)	Contracts between parties in different countries
UNIDROIT Principles of International Commercial Contracts (2016)	How contracts are read and kept
FIPS 180-4 (SHA-256)	Fingerprints

Questions an expert or critic would ask

Is a contract made this way enforceable outside the Nation?
It is made to meet the tests most of the world's laws on electronic contracts share, after the UNCITRAL model laws: the parties are identified, their intent to be bound is shown, and the record is kept unaltered. Whether a particular court will enforce a particular contract is for that court; parties relying on it there should take advice.

"Code is law" — what if the Register gets it wrong?
The words govern, not the Register. If a clause is carried out wrongly, a party takes it to the Court, which decides on the words and the record.

A drawn signature is easy to fake.
The drawn signature is one part of it. A party signs from their own private link, after typing the name the contract gives them, and their signature is chained into the contract's record. Signing with a key held on the party's own device, as officers already do for Edge Marks, is the next step.

Can anyone see my contract on the Ledger?
A private contract appears only as fingerprints. Only its parties, and those they send it to for review, can read it.