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FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Statement

For Immediate Release
September 11, 2014

B.C. Government and First Nations leaders look to future of reconciliation

VANCOUVER –First Nations leaders from across the province and the B.C. Cabinet convened today for a historic day-long dialogue on transforming First Nations-Crown-relations in British Columbia.

Discussion focused on the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in *Tsilhqot'in Nation* as a historic opportunity to work together to build a new path for respect, recognition and reconciliation in the province. The decision also establishes a new reality and legal landscape for our transformed relationship, and that implementation of the decision must be a joint endeavour to achieve success and will require hard work.

First Nations leaders clearly laid out the following foundations that must be the basis for future work:

1. Acknowledgement that all our relationships are based on recognition and implementation of the existence of indigenous peoples' inherent title and rights, and pre-confederation, historic and modern treaties, throughout British Columbia.
2. Acknowledgement that Indigenous systems of governance and laws are essential to the regulation of lands and resources throughout British Columbia.
3. Acknowledgment of the mutual responsibility that all of our government systems shall shift to relationships, negotiations and agreements based on recognition.
4. We immediately must move to consent based decision-making and title based fiscal relations, including revenue sharing, in our relationships, negotiations and agreements.

The First Nations Leadership Council is disappointed that the Province declined to commit today on these key foundations for moving forward, recognizing this is our first political meeting on these fundamental political and legal questions. This work is too important to delay, and the First Nations Leadership Council and First Nations in BC await and look forward to a timely response regarding the foundations of our work together. Regardless, First Nations remain resolute in exercising our respective title and rights, and treaty rights according to these foundations for the benefit of the current and future generations. We will steward our lands and ensure that they are responsibly managed and work toward building strong First Nations governments, communities and economies.

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For further comment please contact:

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