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# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

## News Release

*For Immediate Release*  
**October 7, 2013**

### **First Nations Leadership Council Honours the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Royal Proclamation**

**Coast Salish Territory (Vancouver, BC)** – Today, the BC First Nations Leadership Council recognizes the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Royal Proclamation. On this historic and important occasion, the First Nations Leadership Council calls for a renewed commitment from the Federal Government and Provincial governments to the recognition of Aboriginal Title and Rights and to the resolution of the land question in British Columbia in partnership with First Nations.

In the Royal Proclamation of 1763, King George III affirms Indigenous Title and Rights to unceded territories in North America and cements the Crown's duty to negotiate with Indigenous people for the surrender of land.

“As Indigenous Peoples we have inherent Title and Rights and a sacred duty to protect our territories. It is appalling that the governments of BC and Canada continue to run roughshod over our rights. Through their continued and ongoing legislative and policy changes, the governments continue to implement their self-serving interests without meaningful consultation that is clearly an undeniable legal and constitutional requirement,” said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. “Considering that the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples will be in Canada this week to examine the issues facing Indigenous Peoples, it is vitally important to underscore the great importance for the governments of BC and Canada to recognize, respect and reconcile our Title, Rights and Treaty Rights.”

Robert Phillips, Task Group member of the First Nations Summit added “The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is clear that Indigenous Peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or occupied, a principle articulated in the Royal Proclamation of 1763. The Government of Canada is founded upon this Proclamation and has endorsed the UNDRIP, now is the time for Canada to not just ‘aspire’ to the principles found within these foundational documents but to join us and commit to negotiate and move beyond the Indian Act, move towards true recognition and reconciliation of Aboriginal Title and Rights.”

BC Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould commented, “The Royal Proclamation of 1763 is an incredibly important ethic and legal instrument. It is unequivocal in its acknowledgment that the various ‘Nations or Tribes of Indians’ have aboriginal title to our territories with the promise that before settlement can take place our interests have to be dealt with.” In light of proposed major resource development planned in BC, she added, “the fact that Aboriginal title has not been dealt with in those parts of Canada where there are no treaties does not diminish the promises contained in the Proclamation. There is a need for a modern reconciliation framework based upon recognition, where the land question can be settled through good faith negotiations and where the honour of the Crown is upheld and the promises of the Proclamation fulfilled”.

#### **For further comment please contact:**

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