

FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

NEWS RELEASE

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A Great Day for Indigenous People in Canada: First Nations Summit very optimistic following appointment of new Federal Cabinet

Coast Salish Traditional Territory (Vancouver) – Leaders of the First Nations Summit (FNS) congratulated Prime Minister Justin Trudeau following this morning's announcement of his government's new Cabinet which includes two indigenous members; former BCAFN Regional Chief Puglaas, Jody Wilson-Raybould (Vancouver-Granville) who was appointed Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and Hunter Tootoo (Nunavut) who was appointed Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, and Canadian Coastguard.

"This is a very significant day for BC First Nations and all indigenous people across Canada. Prime Minister Trudeau has sent a powerful signal that represents real change and a new relationship with Indigenous people in this country", said Grand Chief Edward John of the FNS Political Executive. "It's time to now concentrate on true reconciliation and set aside Canada's historic approach of fighting and in some cases denying the existence of Indigenous peoples and Nations in the courts".

"We commend Prime Minister Trudeau for appointing such a strong and diverse Cabinet and for recognizing the importance of having indigenous voices at the Cabinet table. This will surely assist in implementing the ambitious Indigenous agenda and committing to a new Nation to Nation relationship based on reconciliation, recognition and rights as well as respect for historic and modern day Treaties", said Robert Phillips of the FNS Political Executive. "We look forward to meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau and Dr. Carolyn Bennett, newly appointed Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs to discuss how we can work together in an effort to settle the outstanding land question in BC through the negotiation of fair and just treaty agreements and to close the appalling and disproportionate socio-economic gaps faced by our communities and citizens."

"We are buoyed by Prime Minister Trudeau's commitment to change as reflected in the newly appointed Cabinet. In particular, we look forward to engaging in a dialogue with Minister Bennett and Minister Wilson-Raybould to discuss how Canada plans to implement its commitment to undertaking a full public inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls", said Cheryl Casimer, also of the FNS Political Executive. "We also commend Prime Minister Trudeau for placing an emphasis on the importance of Children and Families with his appointment of Jean-Yves Duclos (Quebec) as Minister of the newly minted Ministry of Families, Children and Social Development".

First Nations Summit leaders will be actively seeking early meetings with several Ministers to discuss the government's commitments on key Indigenous issues.



The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. The Summit is also a NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Further background information on the Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

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