



# FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

## NEWS RELEASE

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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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### **“Dialogue” is not enough: First Nations Summit Disappointed with lack of commitments in Federal Throne Speech**

**Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver** – The First Nations Summit is disappointed in the lack of commitments to achieve real, on the ground results for First Nations communities in yesterday’s federal Speech from the Throne. In particular the Summit is highly dismayed by Canada’s soft commitment to “continue (the) dialogue on the treaty relationship and comprehensive land claims”.

“In BC we have been in a “dialogue” on treaty negotiations for more than twenty years with few results to show for the substantial financial resources and time invested by our communities”, said Cheryl Casimer of the First Nations Summit political executive.

“Last week’s Annual Report of the BC Treaty Commission clearly identified key barriers to reaching progress in treaty negotiations in BC. What we need from Canada is a clear and unequivocal commitment to overcome these barriers. As we have said in the past, the time has come for all parties, in particular BC and Canada, to get on with the task at hand and refrain from any further studies or simple “dialogue” and demonstrate the political will to build relationships with First Nations based on mutual recognition and respect, aimed at achieving reconciliation as well as fair and just treaty agreements”, added Ms. Casimer.

The First Nations Summit is also highly disappointed in the patronizing language used in yesterday’s Speech from the Throne.

“The Speech from the Throne clearly shows that Canada is continuing their history of using language denying our very existence. We are once again referred to in the possessive; “our Aboriginal peoples” and are clearly not recognized as a pre-contact society”, said Robert Phillips also of the Summit’s political executive.

“To say that the “*Pioneers, then few in number, reached across a vast continent. They forged an independent country where none would have existed*” does nothing more than deny the deep and rich history of all Aboriginal peoples in Canada. We have been a part of this land since time immemorial. We are not a possession of the federal government. This colonial language is highly offensive and in itself is a barrier to achieving reconciliation in this country”.

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*The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. Further background information on the Summit may be found at [www.fns.bc.ca](http://www.fns.bc.ca).*

For Further Information:

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