



News Release

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First Nations Leadership Council Seeks Partnership and Cooperation with new Prime Minister

Coast Salish Traditional Territory/ Vancouver, B.C. – The First Nations Leadership Council is looking to establish a constructive working relationship with Prime Minister elect Stephen Harper in the wake of a Conservative minority victory. In a letter sent today the Leadership Council congratulated Mr. Harper and requested a meeting during his first official visit to British Columbia as Prime Minister.

"For now, we must put aside our concerns and work to establish a new relationship of trust and cooperation with the Prime Minister and his new government," said Shawn Atleo, BC Regional Chief of the Assembly of First Nations. "We have our priority issues and are confident once we have had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Harper, we will reach a mutual understanding of the required actions on key Aboriginal issues."

The letter also encouraged the Prime Minister-elect and his minority government to work collectively with the other federal parties to ensure Aboriginal issues are given the high priority and attention they deserve.

"We are confident Mr. Harper will honour the historic government-to-government accords signed between First Nations and the Government of Canada at the conclusion of the First Ministers meeting in Kelowna in November. " added Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. "We will also be seeking meetings with all Opposition parties to ensure they fully support the implementation of both the Kelowna Accord and the BC Transformative Change Accord."

"We are encouraged by Mr. Harper's pre-election statements, which promised his party would proceed with the residential school agreement and recognize the contributions of Aboriginal veterans. We look forward to speaking with him about these and other key issues, including the federal government's \$5.1 billion commitment to enhance the lives of Canada's Aboriginal people and the resolution of the land question in for First Nations

both within and outside the BC treaty negotiations process", said Dave Porter and member of the First Nations Summit Political Executive.

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The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the First Nations Summit, Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the BC Assembly of First Nations. The Council works together to politically represent the interests of First Nations in British Columbia and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in British Columbia.

For more information:

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