



MEDIA STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

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First Nations Summit Applauds Turpel-Lafond Nomination for Appointment as BC Representative for Children and Youth

(Vancouver, BC) The First Nations Summit strongly supports the nomination of Judge Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond as the Representative for Children and Youth in British Columbia. Judge Turpel-Lafond was confirmed as a nominee by members of the Legislative Assembly today in a special sitting of the Legislature. It is expected the appointment will be finalized early next week. The position was created as a result of an independent review of the system by former judge and Deputy Attorney General Ted Hughes who provided recommendations on how to improve BC's child welfare protection system.

"She's the right person at the right time. Not only does Judge Turpel-Lafond have outstanding qualifications, she has a deep understanding of the aboriginal community," said Grand Chief Edward John, a member of the First Nations Summit Political Executive.

Judge Turpel-Lafond has been a judge of the Saskatchewan Provincial Court since 1998. A member of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, she is the first Aboriginal appointed to the Saskatchewan Court. Prior to becoming a judge, Turpel-Lafond taught law at a number of schools, including Dalhousie University, University of Toronto, and the University Of Notre Dame.

Her impressive qualifications include a Bachelor of Arts degree from Carleton University in Political Studies in 1982, Bachelor of Laws from Osgoode Hall Law School in 1985, Masters in Law from Cambridge University in 1987, and a Doctorate of Law from Harvard University in 1990. She also holds a certificate in the international and comparative law of human rights from the University of Strasbourg in France.

"We look forward to having a constructive and positive working relationship with Judge Turpel-Lafond in her role as an advocate for children and families in BC," said John.

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The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in the treaty negotiation process in British Columbia. Further background information on the Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

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