



NEWS RELEASE

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FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT PLEASSED RESPONSIBILITY FOR INDIAN AFFAIRS REMAINS IN BC FOLLOWING SHUFFLE

Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – The First Nations Summit is welcoming the appointment of John Duncan as the new federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and is pleased the responsibility for this critical portfolio will remain with a representative from British Columbia following today's cabinet shuffle.

On June 15, 2010, Minister Duncan rose in the House of Commons and said *"... if there is a single defining feature of our government's approach to aboriginal issues, it is our determination to make a measurable and lasting difference in the lives and livelihoods of Canada's aboriginal people."*

"John Duncan will now face the pressures of fulfilling his statement as the new Minister responsible and overcoming his reputation of someone who fights against Aboriginal title and rights. While we will work with him in his efforts, we will also hold him to task to ensure his government makes treaty negotiations in BC a top priority", said Dan Smith, a member of the First Nations Summit Political Executive.

"We are looking forward to an early dialogue with Minister Duncan that will hopefully be positive and constructive in our collective efforts to address the needs of First Nations people in BC", said Chief Doug White, Summit political executive member.

"Treaty negotiations in BC have unfortunately moved at a glacial pace over the past two decades. We will be cautiously optimistic as we sit down with Minister Duncan to discuss his government's plans to expedite the negotiation of fair and just treaties that are founded on the principles of recognition and respect instead of denial, to honourably implement existing treaties, and how we can work together to close the serious social and economic gaps faced by First Nations people in BC and across Canada".

The First Nations Summit will be calling for a meeting as soon as possible to brief the Minister on key concerns and issues faced by First Nations in BC, especially those engaged in treaty negotiations.

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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.

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