



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

NEWS RELEASE

First Nations Summit Congratulates Premier Clark

Encourage government to commit to New Relationship with First Nations Families

For Immediate Release

March 14, 2011

Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – The First Nations Summit today congratulated Premier Christy Clark on her appointment and swearing in of her cabinet, and welcomed the appointment of Mary Polak as the new Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation.

Premier Clark's recognition of the importance of strengthening relationships and creating shared economic opportunities for BC's First Nations was welcome news for BC's First Nations leaders.

"We look forward to working with Premier Clark and Minister Polak and would strongly encourage them to put a renewed emphasis on the New Relationship and the existence of Aboriginal title," said Grand Chief Edward John of the First Nations Summit leadership. "In particular, we would like to see Premier Clark continue the work of her predecessor when it comes to revenue sharing and joint decision making."

"We believe that the government needs to put additional focus and resources on improving the quality of life of First Nations families, especially in terms of addressing poverty. Dealing with the issue of poverty is essential to the Premier achieving her 'Families First' commitment," said Dan Smith of the First Nations Summit leadership.

"The success of the Province of British Columbia and Aboriginal people are closely tied," said Doug White also from the First Nations Summit leadership. "If we are to seriously address the challenges facing our province, then a key priority must be working in cooperation and partnership with First Nations people across British Columbia. That includes honouring existing treaties and engaging with First Nations in a way that leads to just reconciliation and meaningful treaty relationships."

The First Nations Summit looks forward to working with the Premier on her Aboriginal Business/Investment Council, which she proposed during her leadership campaign.

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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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