



NEWS RELEASE

FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT REACTS TO CONTINUED UNSATISFACTORY TREATY OFFERS TO FIRST NATIONS

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Vancouver, BC — Another First Nation is dissatisfied with a treaty offer tabled by the governments of BC and Canada.

The Sliammon First Nation expressed disappointment and frustration with the initial joint treaty offer tabled by the provincial and federal governments today in Sliammon. Chief Denise Smith said “The offer is incomplete and not acceptable to the Sliammon people. It only reflects the narrow government mandates and it disregards the interests Sliammon put forward.”

The Sliammon offer is the latest joint offer tabled by BC and Canada that has proved unsatisfactory to a First Nation negotiating a treaty. In mid January a joint offer was tabled with the Snuneymuxw First Nation which drew a strong negative reaction from the First Nation. Joint offers have also been made to the Ditidaht/Pacheedaht, In-SHUCK-ch/ N’Quat’qua, Gitanyow and Sechelt treaty tables.

“First Nations are not prepared to accept these ‘low-ball’ offers from governments. As well the ‘offers’ are not in any way connected to the negotiations taking place. These public tablings of offers by both governments have become simply an exercise in public relations and containment of First Nations interests”, said Grand Chief Edward John, a member of the Summit executive.

Both governments’ negotiating mandates are narrow and impose unacceptable preconditions on First Nations”, said Chief John. “We strongly reiterate our position that the governments of BC and Canada have failed to live up any principle of good faith negotiations in their methods used to engage in the treaty process.”

“The governments of BC and Canada must again be reminded of their commitments to the principles contained in the BC Claims Task Force Report of 1991, which provides the foundation for this treaty process. The federal government and provincial governments of the day were a party to the sacred signing ceremony and as solemn witnesses, committed to an honourable treaty process guided by the principles of the 1991 Report”, said Robert Louie, another member of the Summit executive.

First Nations have been forced to borrow more than 120 million dollars to date, only to see no tangible results. This is extremely frustrating to all First Nations in the treaty negotiation process. First Nations call upon the governments of BC and Canada to get serious at the negotiating tables before it’s too late.

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