

# First Nations Summit

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Project approval illustrates need for passage of UN Declaration Implementation Act (Bill C-262)**

**Coast Salish Territory, Vancouver, British Columbia** – The First Nations Summit is disappointed with today's decision by the federal government to green light approval of the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion (TMX) project.

"Today's decision by the federal government approving the TMX pipeline expansion does not alter or negate in any way, the federal government's clear legal responsibility to consult and accommodate all First Nations impacted, especially given the precedent provided by a long list of Supreme Court decisions", said Robert Phillips of the First Nations Summit political executive. "It is unfortunate that First Nations will once again be forced to go to the courts as a means to achieving suitable and respectful consultation and accommodation of their rights".

"The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the principles of free, prior and informed consent provide a clear mechanism to avoid conflicts, especially on major projects such as TMX", said Cheryl Casimer of the FNS Political Executive. "The UN Declaration provides the minimum standards for the survival dignity and well-being of Indigenous peoples. Implementing the Declaration and enforcing free, prior and informed consent will ensure that First Nations' Rights, Title and Jurisdiction will be respected, thereby creating an environment where First Nations, government, business and industry can work together. We remain hopeful that the UN Declaration Implementation Bill (C-262) will pass before the end of the current legislative session on Friday, despite stalling tactics of the federal Conservatives".

"We find the timing of today's decision to be filled with irony given yesterday's passage of a motion in the House of Commons declaring a national climate emergency and supporting Canada's commitment to meeting the emissions targets outlined in the Paris Agreement" said Lydia Hwitsum, also of the FNS Political Executive. "Recent reports have clearly indicated that Canada is failing miserably at being on target to meet its emissions reduction targets under the Paris agreement. We fail to see how approving the TMX project will assist in addressing the climate crisis in any way".

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*The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. The Summit is also a NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Further background information on the Summit may be found at [www.fns.bc.ca](http://www.fns.bc.ca).*

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