

First Nations Summit

STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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FNS condemns violent and racist attacks

Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – The First Nations Summit (FNS) condemns the surge in racist and violent attacks that have arisen during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Numerous appalling incidents have been reported in BC and across Canada where visible minority individuals have been targeted because they are, or bear a resemblance to, Asian Canadians, due to a backlash over the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of these unfortunate incidents occurred this past weekend with a disturbing violent attack on Dakota Holmes, an employee of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), an organization the FNS works closely with. In a UBCIC media release, Ms. Holmes bravely shared her story in order to ensure that this and other instances of racism are brought to the forefront.

The FNS decries all forms of racism. As we have articulated for many years, it is imperative that systemic changes are made, and measures taken, to prevent and end the disproportionate violence against visible minorities across Canada, particularly Indigenous women and girls. The only way we can truly combat racism, is to stand up together - the public, governments and the justice system - to bring a stop to these violence acts and to ensure that those individuals who commit these crimes are brought to justice.

COVID-19 does not provide any form of justification for these racist hate crimes. We stand with Ms. Holmes, all other victims of racist attacks, and the entire Asian community.

We are hopeful that the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) will apprehend the suspect in the in the violent attack and hate crime on Ms. Holmes. The FNS encourages anyone who may have witnessed the incident to contact the VPD at 604-717-3321.

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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 an 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.

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