

# First Nations Summit

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**AUGUST 31, 2020**

**First Nations leaders mark International Overdose Awareness Day and call for more action to address BC's overdose crisis**

**(Xʷməθkʷəy̍əm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and sə́ilwətaʔ/seílwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, BC)** — The First Nations Summit (FNS) solemnly marks International Overdose Awareness Day and calls on governments at all levels for bold leadership and decisive action to address the crisis that is disproportionately affecting Indigenous peoples in British Columbia.

Far too many families have lost loved ones to overdose and the time for action is now. While many are focused on COVID-19, it is important to not lose sight of the fact that the number of deaths each month from overdose far outstrips COVID-19.

The First Nations Summit believes appropriate funding and systemic change to the current policies is urgently required to stop the tragedy and reform the system that is clearly not working for Indigenous peoples.

The provincial government, federal government and First Nations Health Authority must redouble their efforts and work in collaboration and full partnership with First Nations to develop a renewed strategy to address the opioid crisis.

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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](http://www.fns.bc.ca).*

**For further information:**

Cheryl Casimer, FNS Political Executive  
Robert Phillips, FNS Political Executive  
Lydia Hwitsum, FNS Political Executive 6

778-875-2157  
778-875-4463  
604-868-0032