



# FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Maa-Nulth agreement a significant step but government must revise negotiation mandates to reach further agreements**

Coast Salish Territory/ Vancouver, BC – The First Nations Summit congratulates the Maa-Nulth First Nations leaders, negotiators and community members for reaching their final treaty agreement and the introduction of the Maa-Nulth First Nations Treaty Settlement legislation in the BC Legislature.

“The Maa-Nulth people should be commended for their significant efforts to reach a final agreement that is appropriate for and supported by their people”, said Grand Chief Edward John, a member of the First Nations Summit political executive. “Today marks a new beginning for the Maa-Nulth communities in moving forward as self-governing and self sustaining communities.”

“Today is a significant day for the Leaders, elders and peoples of the Maa-Nulth Nation. We wish them a good journey on the path they have embraced. We wish all other nations the determination to carve out their own path and arrive at agreements that will meet their communities’ needs and desires as the Maa-Nulth have had the opportunity to do. We call on the governments to work with other First Nations to find just, equitable and unique treaties for each of them,” stated Chief Judith Sayers of the First Nations Summit political executive.

However, First Nations Summit leaders caution that reaching further settlement agreements with other First Nations remains in serious jeopardy unless the federal and provincial governments change their negotiating mandates and commit to act with integrity and good faith at other negotiation tables, and ensure the recognition of aboriginal title and rights.

“Based on today’s significant British Columbia Supreme Court decision in the *Tsilhqot’in Nation v. British Columbia* case, governments must make significant changes to their negotiating mandates in order to reach fair, just and equitable treaties in BC,” added Dave Porter of the First Nations Summit political executive.

“There is also great diversity among First Nations communities in British Columbia. Governments must acknowledge the unique elements necessary to reach settlement agreements with the varied First Nations in BC and should not attempt to use one agreement as a template for other negotiations”, added Chief John.

The First Nations Summit also stresses the need for First Nations to work together to address inter-tribal issues to support successful negotiations.

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

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