



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

NEWS RELEASE

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First Nations Summit congratulates Musqueam for community ratification of important agreement

(Coast Salish Traditional Territory/Vancouver, BC) -- The First Nations Summit congratulates the Chief, Council and community members of the Musqueam First Nation for their overwhelming ratification (98%) of the Reconciliation, Settlement and Benefits agreement negotiated with the Province of BC.

"We commend and congratulate the Musqueam Chief Ernie Campbell, Council, staff and the community members for their perseverance in litigation and negotiations to ensure their community received a fair, just, honourable and agreeable settlement with the Province of BC for this outstanding issue", said Grand Chief Edward John, a member of the First Nations Summit political executive.

"We hope the governments will finally recognize that the legal landscape has shifted through decisions such as the *Haida*, *Taku River Tlingit* and other cases. First Nations in BC should not be forced, as Musqueam was, to litigate as a means to prompt negotiations", said Chief Judith Sayers, also a member of the First Nations Summit political executive. "The Musqueam agreement has clearly illustrated that when two parties come to the negotiations table with a full mandate, fair, timely and meaningful agreements can be reached".

In their legal case, the Musqueam First Nation, through appeal, sought to block the transfer of lands (known as the UBC Golf Course lands) from the Crown to the University of British Columbia because the Crown had not fulfilled its legal obligation to consult and accommodate the Musqueam First Nation. The case resulted in a unanimous BC Court of Appeal decision to allow the Musqueam to appeal a lower court ruling as the consultation and accommodation process the Musqueam was subjected to by government was defective.

The First Nations Summit was an intervener in the case in support of the Musqueam First Nation.

The First Nations Summit hopes this agreement is a reflection that the province is willing to come to fair and equitable agreements with all BC First Nations on outstanding issues.

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The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in the treaty negotiation process in British Columbia. Further background information on the Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

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