



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

NEWS RELEASE

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First Nations Summit Applauds Musqueam and BC for reaching important agreement

(Coast Salish Traditional Territory/Vancouver, BC) -- The First Nations Summit is applauding the efforts of the Musqueam First Nation and the provincial government in reaching the important agreement announced today regarding the UBC Golf Course lands.

"Although it is unfortunate the Musqueam were forced to take legal action to prevent the transfer of the UBC Golf Course lands and to prompt the negotiations which led to today's important agreement, we congratulate the Musqueam and BC for their time and efforts in working together to negotiate an agreement that works for all parties", said Chief Judith Sayers, member of the First Nations Summit political executive.

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 efforts of the Musqueam First Nation to pursue their court action and the resulting negotiations are a clear indication that the governments prevailing attitude of 'business as usual' is not good enough. The legal ground has shifted with court decisions such as the *Haida*, *Taku River Tlingit* and other cases in very significant and constructive ways", said Grand Chief Edward John, also a member of the First Nations Summit Political Executive.

"It is important to note that through recent decisions, the courts have pushed the Crown and First Nations to work together towards reaching fair and just agreements such as the one announced today. However, First Nations should not have to wait for the layers upon layers of court rulings to prompt timely, fair and just negotiations", added Chief John.

The First Nations Summit hopes today's agreement is a reflection that under the New Relationship, the province is willing to come to fair and equitable agreements with 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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