



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

March 24, 2006

First Nations will play a key role in any proposed 'national energy strategy'

Coast Salish Territory/West Vancouver - The executive of the First Nations Summit welcomes the recent comments of CEO Patrick Daniel, Enbridge Inc., who in his remarks to the Empire Club in Toronto called for a "national energy strategy".

"I think First Nations would agree with Mr. Daniel that energy development must be undertaken with, as he says, proper vision, which would then ensure an approach that is free of conflict and confrontation," said Dave Porter, an executive with the First Nations Summit.

"But the road map to that strategy will only emerge if the senior stakeholders, that is, government, industry and affected First Nations, are able to sit down and discuss matters where our Aboriginal title and rights and interests are recognized, respected, and adequately accommodated," said Mr. Porter.

"I'm confident that government and industry both recognize that First Nations will play a key role in the development of any energy strategy that affects them," said Grand Chief Ed John, also an executive of the First Nations Summit.

“Because that is the premise of the New Relationship that is being developed here in BC, where shared decision-making is becoming the new reality,” added Grand Chief John.

On March 9, 2006, the First Nations Summit supported a motion to convene a special forum this year for First Nations to discuss energy-related issues in light of the pressures and opportunities emerging in the energy sector.

“We expect this forum to cover issues involving existing and proposed oil and gas production and transportation, coal bed methane extraction, hydro-electric developments, plus others, as well examining over-lapping jurisdictional issues,” said Mr. Porter.

“We think this forum will be a good start to find common ground amongst ourselves and others and would tie-in nicely to any potential national energy strategy, if that’s pursued,” concluded Mr. Porter.

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The First Nations Summit is comprised of a majority of First Nations and Tribal Councils in BC and provides a forum for First Nations in British Columbia to address issues related to treaty negotiations as well other issues of common concern.