



### **First Nations Summit Supports the Right of the Victims Families to Attend Robert William Pickton's Preliminary Hearing**

***For Immediate Release  
November 27, 2002***

The Chiefs and leaders of the First Nations Summit, who are meeting this week in North Vancouver, are encouraging the BC judiciary to deny defense counsel applications to close Robert William Pickton's preliminary hearing, scheduled for Monday December 2<sup>nd</sup>, to the public and media.

"The First Nations Summit is deeply concerned that the families of the victims will be denied access to the preliminary hearing due to the application by Mr. Pickton's defense counsel", said Grand Chief Edward John, a member of the Summit's political executive. "The families of the victims have already gone through enough trauma without having to worry about access to the legal proceedings. They are anxious and concerned that their chance to hear the evidence of what may have happened to their loved ones could be jeopardized by the application. It is our understanding many of the victims families have been anticipating attending the proceedings as a necessary part of their healing process. We sincerely hope the court chooses to respect the wishes of the victims families", added Chief John.

The First Nations Summit has been monitoring the events that have transpired in the Pickton case and the ongoing investigations into the disappearance of women in the downtown eastside of which approximately 50 % are of Aboriginal ancestry. The First Nations Summit speaks for BC First Nations currently participating in the treaty negotiations process.

-30-

**For more information:**

Colin Braker First Nations Summit  
Cell (604) 328-4094/Office (604) 990-9939  
For further information on the First Nations Summit  
please visit our website at [www.fns.bc.ca](http://www.fns.bc.ca)