



## NEWS RELEASE

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### First Nations Summit Elects New Executive

***For Immediate Release***

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Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – Grand Chief Edward John (Akile Ch'oh), Cheryl Casimer and Robert Phillips have been elected to the First Nations Summit Task Group (political executive) by leaders representing First Nations currently engaged in treaty negotiations in BC.

Chief John, a hereditary Grand Chief of the Tl'azt'en Nation, will be serving his tenth term as a member of the Summit's political executive. He has represented and advocated for First Nations/Indigenous interests on the provincial, national and international stage for more than 30 years. Chief John was also recently re-appointed by the President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council as an Indigenous Member of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) for North America for the term 2014-2016.

Cheryl Casimer will be serving her first term as a member of the FNS political executive. She is a citizen of the Ktunaxa Nation and currently resides in the community of ?aqam (St. Mary's Band) which is located in the southeastern corner of BC. Ms. Casimer is a former Chief and Councillor of the ?aqam First Nation and a former Co-Chair of the First Nations Summit. Ms. Casimer is a longstanding advocate for First Nations issues and perspectives, and is committed to building better bridges of understanding between neighboring cultures.

Robert Phillips will be serving his first term as a member of the FNS political executive. Phillips is a member of the Northern Secwepemc te Qelmucw (Shuswap) of the Canim Lake First Nation. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University College of the Fraser Valley. Mr. Phillips previously served three terms as a Commissioner of the BC Treaty Commission. He also previously served as Chief Negotiator and Self-Government Director at the Northern Shuswap Tribal Council.

Leah George-Wilson (Sisi-ya-ama) of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation and Ray Harris (Shulqwilum) of the Chemainus First Nation were also acclaimed as Co-Chairs of the First Nations Summit. This will be Ms. George-Wilson's fifth term and Mr. Harris' third term as Co-chair. The Co-Chairs are responsible for chairing First Nations Summit meetings as well as the Summit's administration and day-to-day operations.

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The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. The Summit is also a NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Further background information on the Summit may be found at [www.fns.bc.ca](http://www.fns.bc.ca).

For Further Information:

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