

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Statement

June 6, 2022

First Nations Leadership Council deeply concerned for safety of peaceful protestors

(Xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətał (Tseil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.)

The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) is deeply concerned with a troubling incident that occurred during the March for Recognition for Residential Schools in Mission, BC over the weekend. Media reports indicate several peaceful participants were struck by a truck in a hit and run incident by what is described as an elderly “impatient” driver.

Peaceful protests, demonstrations and marches are a critical part of Canadian democracy and those who choose to peacefully partake, deserve all of the protections available. These protections are especially necessary when the peaceful marches occur on roadways. It is incumbent that the RCMP and police agencies actively work to make certain that the necessary safety and traffic protocols are in place to ensure the safety of the public.

The FNLC is concerned that the March for Recognition for Residential Schools does not appear to have had the proper traffic plans in place and that this incident only gained attention after the fact following outreach by protesters to media outlets.

The FNLC encourage the RCMP to undertake a fulsome investigation into the incident now that the driver in question has turned himself in and his vehicle has been seized.

The RCMP must follow up with full accountability of the perpetrator of this horrific act and the FNLC have full expectation the laws will be upheld in this matter. We cannot condone this type of behaviour and expect charges and fines levied to discourage anyone from doing this again.

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The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), First Nations Summit (FNS), and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).

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