

First Nations Summit

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STATEMENT

First Nations Summit thanks Premier Horgan for his service to BC and for his significant commitments on Indigenous Issues

Coast Salish Territory, Vancouver, British Columbia – The First Nations Summit thanks Premier John Horgan for his many important years of service to British Columbians, in particular his 5 years as Premier, and wishes him the best in health and happiness going forward.

We have deep appreciation for Premier Horgan's steadfast commitment to working towards improving the relationship between the Province of British Columbia and First Nations, advancing reconciliation, and bettering the lives of First Nations citizens. We also recognize and thank him for his clear and unwavering leadership throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through Premier Horgan's leadership, BC became the second jurisdiction in the world to pass legislation to implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the first to release an action plan for implementation. This legislation mandates the alignment of existing and future BC laws and has provided a meaningful roadmap for our continuing and collective efforts of reconciliation based on the recognition of and respect for First Nations' rights, and of closing the disproportionate socio-economic gaps experienced by our citizens and communities.

We commend Premier Horgan for the significant steps his government has taken to confronting and combatting racism in BC. In particular, we recognize the provincial government's swift response when racism in the healthcare sector was identified, leading to the *In Plain Sight* report by Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond; the commitment to a similar investigation into racism in the public education system; and the introduction of the Anti-Racism Data legislation which will lead to a larger piece of anti-racism legislation in 2023. These are crucial measures in moving to a modernized and sophisticated relationship that respects and upholds Indigenous human rights.

We also appreciate Premier Horgan's leadership leading to the establishment of the BC First Nations Gaming Revenue Sharing Agreement, that provides First Nations with a critical revenue stream for new economic, social and cultural opportunities that directly benefit their citizens.

We eagerly anticipate the outcome of the NDP leadership convention which will be scheduled for the fall. Premier Horgan's successor will need to build on Premier Horgan's positive approach to Crown-Indigenous relations. To seriously address the challenges facing our province, key priorities must be to fully honour existing treaties and agreements, to negotiate new treaties, agreements, and other constructive arrangements, and to remain working in cooperation and partnership with First Nations people across BC to fully implement the UN Declaration, the Declaration Act, and the Commitment Document, in our collective efforts to continue to move forward in true reconciliation.

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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 information on the First Nations Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

For further information:

Cheryl Casimer, FNS Political Executive
Robert Phillips, FNS Political Executive
Hugh Braker, FNS Political Executive

Phone: 778-975-2157
Phone: 778-875-4463
Phone: 250-720-7998