

# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

## Statement

September 9, 2022  
For Immediate Release

### First Nations Leadership Council Marks the End of Queen Elizabeth II's Reign; Calls on King Charles III to Renounce the Doctrine of Discovery

(xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səilwətaʔ/seilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) acknowledges the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. She was the longest reigning monarch in the history of the British Crown, and the FNLC offers condolences to her family as they grieve. Queen Elizabeth's successor, King Charles III takes on a great responsibility as the representative of the Crown, with whom all Indigenous peoples in Canada have a direct relationship. The FNLC believes his first official act must be renunciation of the Doctrine of Discovery.

The Doctrine of Discovery dehumanized non-Europeans while empires waged war and stole lands, resources and wealth that rightfully belonged to Indigenous peoples all over the world. We call for this international law doctrine to be renounced by the King of England. With a change in Canada's head of state, it's time for a change in the Crown's approach to Indigenous sovereignty.

With the new British monarch, King Charles III is in a position to acknowledge the historic crimes committed by his predecessors and set the stage for a new relationship with Indigenous Peoples around the globe. As an advocate on climate change, King Charles III must take strong action to mitigate climate change in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples

The Doctrine of Discovery was a concept of public international law that justified and enabled European countries to seize lands inhabited by non-Christians around the world. Initially issued as a papal bull in 1452, the Doctrine of Discovery was used by Great Britain and France to claim vast swaths of territory in North America.

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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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