

# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

## News Release

January 17, 2025

### FNLC Extremely Disappointed with Mineral Claim Consultation Framework, Calls for Redoubling of Efforts to Align the Mineral Tenure Act with the UN Declaration

(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), sḵw̓xwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) is extremely disappointed with the government of B.C.'s recently introduced Mineral Claim Consultation Framework (MCCF) and will hold the government of B.C. to its legislative obligations and public commitments to align the *Mineral Tenure Act* (MTA) with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UN Declaration).

The MCCF reflects a bare interpretation of the government of B.C.'s duty to consult and accommodate and falls well short of the minimum human rights standards outlined in the UN Declaration. Incredibly, the MCCF itself was subject to only minimal consultation and the process outlined in the 'Interim Approach to Implement the Requirements of Section 3 of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act' (Interim Approach) was not followed in its development. The government of B.C. must immediately redouble its efforts to fulfill its obligations under section 3 of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and live up to its repeated public commitments to align the MTA with the UN Declaration in a manner consistent with the Interim Approach.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC President, stated, "In its current form, the MCCF will only serve to inundate First Nations with referrals to be responded to on short timelines absent the provision of adequate capacity funding. The MCCF, and the process that led to its development, only serve to illustrate the urgency of the government of B.C. undermining the good work to align the MTA with the UN Declaration in consultation and cooperation with First Nations."

Regional Chief Terry Teegee, remarked, "The legislative tools the government of B.C. intends to use to implement the MCCF have existed all along – the government of B.C. has always had the ability to carry out its version of consultation and accommodation, it just chose not to. The MCCF reflects an interpretation of Crown obligation and the rights of First Nations that belongs firmly in the past. We will do all we can to ensure that the government of B.C. does not shirk its obligations and commitments to align the MTA with the UN Declaration."

"We are well aware of the regressive comments coming from the BC Conservative caucus calling for an end to attempts to align the *Mineral Tenure Act* with the UN Declaration," stated Robert Phillips of the First Nations Summit Political Executive. He added, "the minimum human rights of First Nations are non-negotiable and are in no way barriers to prosperity; when the basic human rights of First Nations are upheld and respected, certainty, predictability, and success for all British Columbians follows."

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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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