

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

News Release

March 17, 2025

FNLC Celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the Leadership Accord: Launches FNLC Website

(Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) Twenty years ago, on March 17, 2005, the political executives of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), the First Nations Summit (FNS), and the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) signed the historic Leadership Accord to bring to life the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC). This landmark agreement has fostered a powerful cooperative spirit among First Nations in British Columbia, enabling a united voice to champion First Nation's collective interests, rights and title as directed through resolutions. At this time, we are pleased to launch a new [website](#) about the FNLC today to share our history, partnerships, mandates, and news.

The FNLC has played a pivotal role in implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)* into provincial and federal legislation, advocating for the recognition and protection of First Nations rights in legislative and policy development. Over the past decade, the FNLC has also collaborated with the provincial government to co-host the annual First Nations Leadership Gathering, the largest event of its kind, bringing together First Nations leadership and the BC Cabinet for several days of plenaries and one-on-one meetings. The FNLC has made significant strides in addressing urgent priority areas, as directed by First Nations through resolutions at UBCIC, FNS and BCAFN. These initiatives include establishing systems of support that empower communities to reclaim jurisdiction over their children and family services, aligning with broader legislative changes in Canada, such as *Bill C-92*, which affirms First Nations' authority to govern child welfare within their jurisdictions.

"Today, we honour the foundational work of the FNLC, which emphasizes the importance of unity and focused effort. We will strive to maintain the momentum of our progress with pride and shared commitment to the promising future that lies ahead. In celebrating this anniversary, we acknowledge what we have achieved alongside the adoption of *UNDRIP* as well as critical legislation that recognizes our rights and affirms our place in decision-making processes affecting our territories and communities," remarked Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC President

"The Leadership Accord has been more than an agreement; it has become a symbol of our solidarity and hope, guiding us through challenges and amplifying our voices on matters affecting our communities," declared Chief Cheryl Casimer, FNS political executive. "As we look ahead to the coming years, we remain committed to growth and improvement, reinforcing core principles to ensure that every First Nation in B.C. is heard, respected and celebrated for generations to come."

"As directed by the Chiefs-in-assembly, the FNLC leadership will continue to prioritize a strong, unified voice for First Nations," stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee, BCAFN. "Today, as we take a moment to reflect on the hard-won progress and significant milestones we've achieved together over the past two decades in advocating for First Nations rights, we acknowledge that our journey is deeply rooted in a collective vision forged from a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and injustices wrought by colonization. This vision has been a guiding light, illuminating the complex issues we face as First Nations, including the ongoing impacts on our cultures, communities, and rights."



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The political strength of First Nations in British Columbia has significantly increased in recent years as they assert greater control over governance and decision-making. This empowerment is driven by active negotiations with both the provincial and federal governments on key issues, reflecting a shift towards shared decision-making and First Nations sovereignty.

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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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