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## First Nations Leadership Council

### INFORMATION BULLETIN

#### Leadership Accord

On March 17, 2005, the Regional Chief of the BC Assembly of First Nations, the Task Group of the First Nations Summit, and the political executive of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs signed the *Leadership Accord*.

The purpose of the Accord is to: affirm mutual respect; formalize a cooperative working relationship to politically represent the interests of First Nations in BC and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in BC; and focus on a range of issues and initiatives of common interest or concern among First Nations in BC, including consultation and accommodation, national processes, and social and economic program and service issues.

Work under the Leadership Accord is guided by the following principles:

- The Parties recognize and respect each other's respective mandate;
- The Parties will be mindful that they each represent a diversity of perspectives on issues relating to Aboriginal title, rights and interests;
- The Parties commit to work to advance the interests of First Nations in political level discussions amongst themselves and with governments;
- The Parties will represent their respective memberships in any discussions that directly involve government and industry.

Through the Accord, the Parties commit to engage in an ongoing process of dialogue through regular leadership meetings to achieve the purposes of this Accord and, where possible, develop common understandings, strategies and/or positions on identified issues of

mutual concern or priority. The Parties also agree to establish working groups on identified issues of concern or priority to advance those issues politically.

The relationship established through the *Leadership Accord* remains strong on this second anniversary of its signing. Although some successes have been achieved (New Relationship, Transformative Change Accord, New Relationship Trust, others), much remains to be done. The mandate of the First Nations Leadership Council is determined only through the mandates of each of its participating organizations – the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and Union of BC Indian Chiefs – as established via resolution of their respective memberships.

The First Nations Leadership Council is a political process, not a new organization. Its purpose is to generate political power through cooperation and collaboration between the existing provincial First Nations organizations.

The First Nations Leadership Council does not have its own staff members – the staff of the three participating organizations are responsible for following up on resolutions passed at the assemblies of the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and work together on issues for which all three organizations have a mandate.

The BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs are committed to maintaining unity on matters of common concern to benefit all BC First Nations, as well as to autonomy of each organization in achieving progress on issues specific to their respective memberships.

#### Frank Paul Inquiry

The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) welcomed the recent

announcement by BC Solicitor General John Les, that Mr. Justice William H. Davies has been appointed to lead the public inquiry into the death of Frank Paul.

“We welcome the appointment of an eminent jurist, former B.C. Supreme Court Justice Davies to lead this important public inquiry into the tragic death of Frank Paul”, said Grand Chief Edward John, member of the First Nations Summit political executive and the FNLC. “We expect to be fully involved in the development of the inquiry’s terms of reference as it is critical for us to ensure the family of Frank Paul and aboriginal people have the appropriate standing”, added Chief John.

“We are looking forward to working closely with Mr. Davies in our collective efforts to reconcile the relationship between First Nations and the justice system,” said Shawn Atleo, BCAFN Regional Chief and member of the FNLC. “We hope his work will finally provide closure to the family of Frank Paul, by providing them answers to questions they have been asking for almost ten years.”

“Many, many individuals, aboriginal organizations, and human rights groups marched and lobbied for a full public inquiry into the tragic death of Frank Paul. Therefore, we need to ensure the public inquiry is fully empowered to carry out a comprehensive investigation into the conduct of all police, corrections, and Provincial government officials involved in the Frank Paul tragedy,” said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs and member of the FNLC.

Frank Joseph Paul, a Mi’kmaq man, died of hypothermia in December 1998 shortly after being released by the Vancouver police department into an east Vancouver alley.

The FNLC hopes the public inquiry will help to provide closure for Mr. Paul’s family by answering the many questions that remain regarding the circumstances of his death. The inquiry provides an opportunity to

address systemic racism and determine recommendations on provincial policing practices involving, and relating to, First Nations and Aboriginal peoples, as well as reconciliation measures between First Nations and the Crown in the area of policing.

### **New Relationship**

There are five key priorities under the New Relationship: Legislation, Policy and a Cultural Shift in Government; Consultation and Accommodation; Ecosystem Stewardship Planning (Land Use Planning); Shared Decision-Making; and Revenue and Benefit Sharing.

Short-term deliverables targeted by the FNLC include: A recognition mechanism; improvements to the Environmental Assessment Process; Heritage Conservation Act review and amendment; Education Forum; Ecosystem Stewardship Planning Protocol; and a Gaming Revenue-Sharing Agreement.

For three days out of each month, the FNLC meets with provincial officials to set direction, review progress and have high-level discussion on these five priorities. Technical work is mainly achieved through joint working groups.

### **Transformative Change Accord**

Work continues between the FNLC and the province to develop a draft implementation strategy for the Transformative Change Accord. The health plan has been released, and the other sections will soon be ready to distribute to First Nations for comment and advice.

It is hoped that Canada will fulfill its commitments under the Transformative Change Accord, and engage with the FNLC and BC to develop the 10-year plan to improve the quality of life for First Nations in BC – including reconciling title and rights and building a new relationship based on recognition.

### **Fisheries**

A Joint First Nations-Federal Government Fisheries Forum was held on March 5-6, 2007. Over 150 First Nations delegates attended the Forum, as well as Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Loyola Hearn, other DFO representatives, Service Canada, Parks Canada, INAC, Environment Canada and others.

On March 5, the FNLC presented the BC First Nations Fisheries Action Plan prepared through the two internal First Nations Fisheries Forums held in late 2006. Minister Hearn addressed the delegates and provided preliminary support for most of the Action Plan. DFO then presented on Pacific Fisheries Reform and the proposed changes to the Fisheries Act.

On day 2, the federal departments provided their early responses to the BC First Nations Fisheries Action Plan. First Nations then went in-camera for the afternoon to discuss next steps, particularly with respect to a First Nations Fisheries Council.

A proceedings report of the Forum is being prepared, and will be shared with all First Nations. Information will also be provided in April regarding an inclusive process to develop a BC First Nations Fisheries Council.

### **Energy Summit**

The FNLC invites all BC First Nations to attend a province-wide First Nations Energy Summit from April 2 – 4, 2007 at the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver.

This summit will provide a forum for dialogue with government and industry on renewable and nonrenewable energy issues and opportunities. First Nations leaders will begin work on developing a BC First Nations Energy Action Plan to address energy sector issues and keep appropriate First Nations participation with government and industry at the early stages of all energy proposals within First Nations traditional territories.

“The First Nations Energy Summit will provide a critical opportunity for

the Chiefs to assemble and consider the BC Government's recently released Energy Plan and explore cooperative engagement among First Nations, the federal and provincial governments, industry and stakeholders on all energy issues from on-shore to off shore", said Regional Chief Shawn Atleo.

Among those confirmed to speak at the Energy Summit are environmentalist and climate change expert Dr. David Suzuki, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Richard Neufeld, and United States Consul General Lewis Lukens.

"First Nation communities are hopeful that this Summit will be a positive example of the New Relationship in action. We look forward to having senior government officials attend the First Nations Energy Summit and provide First Nations with commitments to ensure the New Relationship between First Nations and the provincial government produces workable on the ground solutions that respect our rights and entitlements at the community level on present and future energy matters", added Grand Chief Stewart Phillip.

"Climate change is a primary concern of all Canadians including First Nation people. We want to encourage and ensure First Nation voices are heard loud and clear in our efforts to contribute to the national debate on issues of energy development and the environment. The First Nations Energy Summit in April will be an important start to BC First Nations participating in shaping this significant agenda", concluded Grand Chief Edward John.

Please contact Chris Lewis at (604) 922-7733 or [fisheries@bcfn.ca](mailto:fisheries@bcfn.ca) or Dawn Morris at (250) 562-6279 or [firstnationsenergysummit@yahoo.ca](mailto:firstnationsenergysummit@yahoo.ca) for more information or a registration form.

### Art Contest

The FNLC and the Provincial Health

Officer are hosting an art contest for the cover design and inside pages of the next Report on Health and well-being of Aboriginal People in British Columbia due for release in November 2007.

This contest is open to all Aboriginal students who are attending school in British Columbia. The winner of the contest will receive \$500 and an additional \$500 for the school that they are attending.

Technical requirements:

- Maximum size: 11x17
- Art work can be submitted in traditional or digital form
  - Traditional: Artwork can be on any surface with any medium. Use a fixative if you use chalk, pencil or pastel to avoid smudge or distortion.
  - Digital: All digital art must be submitted in high resolution (300 pixels per inch). The final digital file formats should be submitted in EPS, TIFF, JPEG (high resolution) or Photoshop (psd).

**Deadline for submission: July 31, 2007.** Please direct submissions or any questions to any of the BCAFN, FNS or UBCIC.

### Health

On November 27, 2006, the FNLC, Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia signed a First Nations Health Plan Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and the Leadership Council and BC released a BC First Nations Health Plan. These two agreements are designed to close the gaps in health outcomes that exist between First Nations and other British Columbians. For copies of the MoU and Health Plan, please visit [www.bcfn.ca](http://www.bcfn.ca); [www.fns.bc.ca](http://www.fns.bc.ca); [www.ubcic.bc.ca](http://www.ubcic.bc.ca).

Work has begun to implement these plans: A First Nations Health Council is in an early stage of development; and a working group is developing a draft tripartite First Nations Health Plan committed to in the MoU.

A province-wide First Nations Health Conference will be held on April 11-12 in Vancouver. The purpose of this Conference will be to review the draft tripartite First Nations Health Plan and receive advice from health professionals and First Nations on its implementation. Further information on this important event will be distributed in the coming weeks.

### Technology

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual First Nations Technology Conference was held February 22-25 in Vancouver. The Pre-Conference event was on Gaming and Game Development as a Tool of Education and Economic Development. Presentations were made by youth whose lives have been changed by working on games and learning from games and by academic experts who presented proof that games are the 21<sup>st</sup> century way of learning.

The full Conference began February 23 in partnership with other community groups such as the Pacific Community Network Association, Community Learning Networks, Community Access Program and BC3. Information Management was the theme of the first day and included presentations from Garry Oker from NENAS (North East Native Advancing Society) and Gwen Phillips from the Ktunaxa Nation on a new approach to consultation and an integrated approach to information management. Gwen presented CRIMSIN (Comprehensive Resource and Information Management System for Indigenous Nations) a model developed by the Ktunaxa Nation that is being expanded with the goal of sharing it with other communities.

Other highlights included Demystifying the Box – learning to take apart and rebuild computers, Building a Wireless Network, Technical Capacity Building, and using Technology as a Tool for Social and Political Change.

First Nations participation at this conference has risen from about 30

year one to over 150 this year. Presentations are on the FNTC website ([www.fntc.info](http://www.fntc.info)). For more information or to get involved in FNTC activities, email [info@fntc.info](mailto:info@fntc.info)

## **FNLC Meeting Notes**

At the recommendation of First Nations, this section of the information bulletin is to describe discussion and meetings of the FNLC.

- The FNLC is hosting a placement of a law student; this student is conducting a survey of all BC First Nations on priorities and processes for the FNLC. We hope that all First Nations can offer their advice.
- A joint FNLC-BC Recognition Working Group is meeting regularly to produce a draft consultation and accommodation framework, among other recognition-related tasks.
- A Steering Committee with representation from the FNLC, BC and Canada has been formed to oversee the planning of two First Nations Justice Forums in 2007
- A joint FNLC-BC Legislative Murals Working Group has been formed to follow up on the Throne Speech commitment to replace the artwork in the rotunda of the Legislature.
- A joint FNLC-BC Working Group will be struck in March to engage in discussions on ecosystem stewardship planning with the provincial government
- A joint FNLC-BC working group on the *Heritage Conservation Act* has been struck to make recommendations on amendments to the legislation
- Two video pilot projects have been produced to improve public awareness about First Nations and the New Relationship

- FNLC working with BC to develop and introduce a new internship program for First Nations youth in the spring
- A comprehensive study on the status of First Nations and Aboriginal housing in BC is being conducted to assist in developing the Transformative Change Accord implementation strategy.
- FNLC met with INAC to discuss BC Region Strategic Plan
- The FNLC supported an ECD Forum held in Vancouver on March 14-15, to discuss appropriate “school readiness” measurement tools, a potential ECD MoU, and a First Nations ECD Action Plan. An update on this Forum will be included in next month’s bulletin.
- FNLC and BC preparing the next edition of the New Relationship Progress Report
- The FNLC is working with the Ministry of Community Services on a brochure on violence against Aboriginal women. Any individuals interested in volunteering as a review committee for the document are encouraged to contact us.

## **Calendar of Events**

- **March 14-16:** FNS Meeting (Joe Mathias Rec Centre)
- **March 26-27:** UBCIC Chiefs Council
- **April 2-4:** First Nations Energy Summit (Joe Mathias Rec Centre)
- **April 10-11:** BC First Nations Health Conference

*The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs:*

- *BC Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief A-in-chut, Shawn Atleo;*
  - *First Nations Summit Task Group members Grand Chief Edward John, Chief Judith Sayers, Dave Porter;*
  - *Union of BC Indian Chiefs President Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Vice-President Chief Robert Shintah; Chief Lynda Price*
- The Council works together to politically represent the interests of First Nations in British Columbia and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in British Columbia.*