



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS
312-345 Chief Alex Thomas Way
Kamloops, BC V2H 1H1
Office: (250) 828 - 9757 Fax: (250) 828 - 9893
www.bcafn.ca

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

RECOGNITION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIGENOUS RIGHTS FRAMEWORK ACKNOWLEDGED BY BC REGIONAL CHIEF TERRY TEEGEE

(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George, BC – February 15, 2018) – Following Prime Minister Trudeau's speech yesterday regarding the recognition and implementation of an Indigenous rights framework, the Regional Chief was pleased to hear renewed commitments towards improving the lives of Indigenous people, and stated: "We look forward to building a relationship founded on the recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership with Canada, and we will support this framework to achieve reconciliation in this country."

Prime Minister Trudeau acknowledged that although Aboriginal rights have been recognized and affirmed in Section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, both First Nations and the Crown have spent millions of dollars on litigation as the courts continue to be used in an adversarial way, and this must change.

This new framework aims to provide guidance for recognition and implementation of First Nations rights; it will also be used as a tool for dispute resolution. The framework will guide the implementation of recommendations from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and the countless other studies and reports. This framework will also guide all federal laws related to implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a new norm in Canadian laws, policies and regulations.

Despite this, the Regional Chief remains cautiously optimistic about this new framework. There are many things Canada can do right now to implement the many frameworks already in place and mentioned above, as noted by MP Romeo Saganash today following the Prime Minister's speech, such as respecting the Free, Prior, and Informed consent on resource and development projects like Site C and the Kinder Morgan pipeline.

Regional Chief Teegee said: "While it is inspiring to hear the Prime Minister renew his commitments to Indigenous Peoples in Canada, the concrete actions and measured deliverables that come out of these commitments are their most important features. First Nations in BC look forward to contributing to this conversation as it moves forward in partnership with Canada, and in developing supports and capacity to realize the potential of this framework."

For further information, contact:

Regional Chief Terry Teegee, BC Assembly of First Nations
(250) 299-2030

#honouringourancestors

