



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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BC Assembly of First Nations Celebrates Successful 19th Annual General Meeting

X^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skw^xwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) – The BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) has closed its 19th Annual General Meeting after three days of deliberation, discussion, and reflection. This was the first time the BCAFN held a full-scale in-person meeting since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and was held on-site at the Musqueam Community Centre. BCAFN Knowledge Keeper Dr. Gwendolyn Point opened and closed each day of proceedings. Chairperson of the Nisga’a Lisims Council of Elders Herb Morven provided closing remarks at the end of the Assembly.

“I am extremely pleased with the important work that we accomplished during our Annual General Meeting,” said Regional Chief Terry Teegee. “Chiefs in assembly truly honoured the strengths of our ancestors by continuing to hold provincial and federal governments to account in dismantling colonial structures, and continuing the work to implement the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in a meaningful and timely way.”

During the second day of meetings, the BCAFN held a blanketing ceremony to honour outgoing members of the BCAFN Board of Directors Charles Morven, Nisga’a Lisims Government, Brian Assu, We Wai Kai Nation, and Chief Councillor Elaine Moore, Nisga’a Village of Gitwinksihlkw.

Chiefs in Assembly focused much of their discussion during the meeting on leveraging the implementation of The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and upholding title and rights in areas as diverse as justice, children and family services, health governance, water jurisdiction, and the application of successorship to forest license transfer to First Nations.

Chiefs held a significant discussion on how First Nations can move forward with recovery of salmon stocks, and how the diversity of positions on the issue of fisheries jurisdiction and management can be reflected by the BCAFN and the First Nations Fisheries Council.

Invited guests made presentations, and Chiefs were able to give direct instructions to these ministers and public servants to advance reconciliation and further dismantle colonial governance. Guests included:

- Federal Minister of Public Safety, Marco Mendicino
- Federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Marc Miller
- Deputy Commissioner of RCMP, Dwayne McDonald
- BC Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation, Ravi Kahlon
- Federal Minister of Justice, David Lametti
- BC Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation and Relations and Acting Attorney General, Minister Murray Rankin

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The BCAFN's financial statements were approved by the Chiefs in Assembly. Chiefs will assemble once again at the BCAFN Special Chiefs Assembly in March 2023.

For further information, contact:

Annette Schroeter, Communications Officer. Phone: (778) 281-1655.

