



507-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-922-7733
Fx: 604-922-7433



1200-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-926-9903
Fx: 604-926-9923
Toll Free: 866-990-9939



500-342 Water Street
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1B6

Ph: 604-684-0231
Fx: 604-684-5726

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 8, 2011

First Nations Leaders Ask Leadership Candidates “What will you do?”

(Coast Salish Territory / Vancouver – February 8, 2011) The BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs is publicly releasing a joint letter to the leadership candidates of the BC Liberal Party and the BC New Democratic Party.

A copy of the letter is attached and it is anticipated that the candidates will formally reply with their written response.

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For more information and further comment:

Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould, BC Assembly of First Nations (778) 772-8681
Grand Chief Ed John, First Nations Summit (778) 772-8218
Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Union of BC Indian Chiefs (250) 490-5314

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF
FIRST NATIONS

507-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-922-7733
Fx: 604-922-7433



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NATIONS
SUMMIT

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West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-926-9903
Fx: 604-926-9923
Toll Free: 866-990-9939



UNION OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA
INDIAN CHIEFS

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V6B 1B6

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Fx: 604-684-5726

February 8, 2011

[Leadership Candidate]

Dear [Leadership Candidate]

In 2005, the Government of British Columbia and the First Nations of British Columbia as represented by the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and the BC Assembly of First Nations working together as the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), achieved significant and historic milestones in First Nations-Crown relations in British Columbia in agreeing to the *New Relationship* vision and action items, and to bringing about the tripartite *Transformative Change Accord* with Prime Minister Martin. In these political accords we committed to close the socio-economic gap between First Nations and other British Columbians, reconcile Aboriginal Title and Rights and establish a new relationship based on mutual respect and recognition.

Negotiating the *New Relationship* and *Transformative Change Accord* was the easy part of our joint work. The hard part is fulfilling the mutual commitments we made and truly changing the course of First Nation-Crown relations in BC in a way that empowers our Nations and results in real, concrete change to our children, families and communities.

We acknowledge that the Province has completed several agreements with First Nations on the basis of the *New Relationship* and the *Transformative Change Accord* however significant progress with all First Nations has not been achieved. Direct negotiation with First Nations is necessary and consistent with the commitment to “recognition of the need to preserve each First Nations’ decision-making authority.” The FNLC supports First Nations in their negotiation of agreements with the Province as autonomous Nations and this work needs to be accelerated.

In this regard, we ask you as a leadership candidate for your party, what will you do to revitalize the government’s work to implement the commitments made in the New Relationship document?

Specifically, we ask you the following:

- Please provide your perspective on how First Nations can meaningfully provide input into provincial legislative initiatives and provincial program and policy development that begins to reconcile their respective Aboriginal Title and Rights?
- What will you do to maximize First Nations involvement in the economy and building governance capacity?
- What is your view on how the provincial government can better assist First Nations in engaging industry, investors and other third parties to support the

New Relationship vision to close the socio-economic gap based on mutual respect and recognition?

- What will you do as Premier to strengthen BC Consultation Policies in a manner that fully respects our Aboriginal Title & Rights in order to prevent resource development conflicts such as the Prosperity Mine issue?

We look forward to your written response via fax (604) 684-5726.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS:

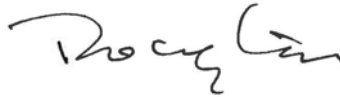


Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould

On behalf of the FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT:



Grand Chief Edward John



Chief Douglas White III Kwulasultun



Dan Smith

On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip



Chief Robert Chamberlin



Chief Marilyn Baptiste