



British Columbia All Chiefs' Task Force

March 1, 2010

Dear fellow Chiefs and Leaders,

Please accept this update on the activities of the All-Chiefs' Task Force to date. Daily updates are posted to our blog at <http://firstnationstaskforce.wordpress.com/> and also to the websites of the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Chair of the Task Force (Beverley Clifton Percival), or any of the Task Force Working Group Chairs (Beverley Clifton Percival, Chief Judy Wilson, Chief Wayne Christian), with any questions.

An All-Chiefs' Assembly will be scheduled for May 2010 to fully report on the activities of the Task Force.

Background

At the All-Chiefs' Assembly on Recognition and Reconciliation held on August 25-28, 2009, an All-Chiefs' Task Force, composed of volunteer First Nation leaders from across the province, was established to build upon the outcomes and energy of the gathering by drafting and implementing a short-term action plan which addressed two goals:

1. Communicate the urgency and importance of raising awareness and recognition of Aboriginal title and rights at the provincial, national and international levels, and with the general public.
2. Strive to increase efficiency by better organizing ourselves internally as First Nations in British Columbia by working together on issues of common concern.

The All-Chiefs' Task Force developed and presented its draft Action Plan, including a mural of our vision for First Nations in BC at the BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC meetings in October and November, and has received resolutions of support from the Chiefs and leaders of each organization.

Since that time, the Task Force has moved forward on implementing the Action Plan by focusing its work in three key areas:

1. Coordinated Action
2. Operational-Technical
3. Political-Legal

Coordinated Action

The purpose of the Coordinated Action Working Group is to work with a public relations firm to develop and implement a coordinated action strategy to raise awareness of our issues. Its members are: Chief Wayne Christian (Chair); Cliff Atleo; Chief Joe Hall; Glenn Williams; Kathryn Teneese; and Lisa Shaver.

The coordinated action strategy was developed in early 2010, and work on its implementation has been ongoing throughout the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The overarching key message of the



British Columbia All Chiefs' Task Force

coordinated action strategy is that **there is much work which still needs to be done to address Aboriginal human rights, poverty, lost and missing women and rights and title. The first step in resolving these issues is for all Canadians to urge the Federal Government to adopt the United Nation's Declaration on Rights for Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) – an international document supported by 145 states that sets out the minimum human rights standards of Indigenous peoples worldwide. First Nations leadership and many Canadians support the UNDRIP to promote the survival, dignity, and well-being for Indigenous communities, children and next generations.**

In addition to this overarching key message, the following messages were developed and delivered as part of the campaign:

- Key Messages on the UNDRIP
 - The cost for Canada to not support the Declaration will be highlighted in First Nations poverty, further missing women, human rights complaints, and continued land and resource disputes.
 - Canada's reputation as leaders of international human rights will come into question.
 - During these difficult economic times, it makes resounding sense for Canada to adopt the UNDRIP as it supports strong Nations and vibrant families and communities, which will benefit First Nations and non-First Nations alike.
 - The UNDRIP provides a framework for Canada to build positive relationships with First Nations and be a prominent participant in the global support and successful implementation strategies.
- Key Messages on Human Rights
 - This is not about "special treatment". The UNDRIP promotes equality for Indigenous peoples and recognizes their basic and fundamental human rights, as a collective or as individuals. This supports the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law.
 - Refusal to adopt the declaration is a basic denial of human rights for First Nations and implies acceptance of further human rights violations against First Nations.
 - The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has accepted a human rights complaint submitted by a group of BC First Nations, the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group and will be hearing their argument in the Spring of 2010. The HTG has provided a very strong statement on the ineffectiveness and inadequacy of the BC Treaty process and Canada's judicial system to provide remedy for the protection of the Hul'qumi'num human rights to property and aboriginal title.
 - Adoption of the declaration will reduce further lengthy and costly litigations and human rights complaints.
- Key Messages on Poverty
 - First Nations take responsibility for the survival, dignity, and well-being of their children and families.
 - First Nations leaders recognize the need to work together with government to meaningfully address poverty and close the socio-economic gaps between First Nations and British Columbians.
- Key Messages on Missing and Murdered Women
 - Indigenous women continue to suffer violence, indignity, and discrimination based on race, gender and economic status.



British Columbia All Chiefs' Task Force

- Efforts must continue to bring justice and restore the dignity and respect for First Nations women to ensure the safety of our grandmothers, mothers, daughters, sisters, teachers, and leaders. First Nations women must not be forgotten.
- There are 520 cases of missing or murdered Aboriginal women in Canada. This is a serious issue that has long been ignored by Canada, where other countries would have already taken action.
- Key Messages on Title and Rights
 - First Nations are committed to working together in nation-to-nation relationships that respect the title and rights and decision-making of each nation.
 - The recognition and respect for First Nations inherent title and rights provides opportunities for First Nations to be prominent in sustainable and successful economic and social initiatives that will benefit all peoples.
 - First Nations are moving forward in positions of strength and confidence of their rights.
 - Cost of doing nothing (e.g. lengthy costly litigations)

To date, the Coordinated Action Working Group has undertaken the following activities to highlight the key messages:

- Established a successful blog, which is updated daily with new and emerging media coverage (see: <http://firstnationstaskforce.wordpress.com/>)
- Established a facebook page (see: <http://www.facebook.com/?sk=messages#!/pages/British-Columbia-All-Chiefs-Task-Force/307210113696?ref=ts>)
- Daily twitter updates on the work of the All Chiefs Task Force
- Issued three news releases and developed media fact sheets
- Organized a press conference in Victoria the day of the Prime Minister's visit
- Outreached extensively to international, national, aboriginal and social media, and conducted a large number of interviews
- A postcard and radio public service announcement campaign
- Participated in, and provided support to, the 10th Annual Women's Memorial March

This campaign has been extremely successful so far, and we must continue to maintain the momentum to ensure our messages are heard. **We are seeking the support of your communities to continue to emphasize the key messages of our campaign in your local media, by directing your local communities to the Task Force blog, by participating in the postcard campaign to the Prime Minister, and in any other opportunities that may arise over the coming months.** Copies of the postcards are available on the blog or by request to Harmony Johnson at hjohnson@fns.bc.ca.

Please continue to visit the Task Force blog at <http://firstnationstaskforce.wordpress.com/> for updates, and do not hesitate to contact us at any time with any questions or suggestions, or to lend your support.

Chief Wayne Christian
Chair, Coordinated Action Working Group

Operational-Technical

The Operational-Technical Working Group has four goals:



British Columbia All Chiefs' Task Force

1. Organize ourselves to maintain unity, trust, and political discipline amongst First Nations and uphold the All Our Relations Declaration
2. A clear and supported structure, roles and responsibilities, and process for All-Chiefs' Assemblies / First Nations political organizations (decision-making, agenda-setting, etc.)
3. Efficient and effective use of available resources, and of peoples' time
4. Maximize the resources provided directly to First Nations communities

To achieve these goals, the Operational-Technical Working Group is conducting a review of the Leadership Accord process to date. The members of the Working Group include: Beverley Clifton Percival (Chair); Chief Maureen Chapman; James Wilson; and Alphonse Gagnon.

In January 2010, the Operational-Technical Working Group released a Request for Proposals for the review. Following an analysis of the bids submitted, GMG Consulting Service, Inc. was chosen by the Working Group as the lead for this project. GMG Consulting has been provided with relevant background materials, and is in the midst of conducting an interview and survey process to inform the review, including on-site interviews at the March 2010 Union of BC Indian Chiefs and First Nations Summit meetings, as well as surveys and interviews with a representative cross section of staff, leadership and community stakeholders. Once the interview phase is complete, and a summary of all feedback developed the All-Chiefs' Task Force will work with GMG Consulting to prepare a final report and series of options and recommendations for consideration of Chiefs and leaders at the All-Chiefs' Assembly in May 2010.

Beverley Clifton Percival
Chair, Operational-Technical Working Group

Political-Legal

The purpose of the Political-Legal Working Group is to develop recommendations to achieve a) effective implementation of section 35 constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and treaty rights, court decisions, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, b) revision of the comprehensive claims policy, and c) implementation of the duty of the Crown to negotiate in good faith and uphold its fiduciary duty. The members of the Political-Legal Working Group include: Chief Judy Wilson (Chair); Chief Gibby Jacob; Kathryn Teneese; Roger William; and Robert Morales.

To date, the Working Group has developed the following:

- A revised version of the Action Plan to include more specific actions and next steps
- An outline for a section 35 and UNDRIP toolkit for First Nations communities in BC
- A gap analysis of the comprehensive claims policy
- An analysis of the outstanding recommendations (not covered by the All-Chiefs' Action Plan) raised by First Nations Chiefs and leaders at the recognition and reconciliation regional sessions held throughout the summer of 2009

The Working Group will provide a comprehensive report at the May 2010 All-Chiefs' Assembly.

Chief Judy Wilson
Chair, Political-Legal Working Group