



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

May 30, 2025

Regional Chief Terry Teegee withdraws from Asia Trade Mission Following Passage of Bills 14 & 15

(Lheidli T'enneh Territory/Prince George, BC) - Regional Chief Terry Teegee cancelled his planned attendance in British Columbia's Asia Trade mission from June 2nd – 6th following the Provincial government's forced passage of Bills 14 and 15. Bill 14 (*Renewable Energy Projects Act*) and Bill 15 (*Infrastructure Projects Act*) passed their third reading on May 28th despite overwhelming opposition from First Nations, environmental groups and municipalities and clearly violates the Province's own *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

The decision to withdraw from the trade mission reflects the profound damage inflicted on the BC Crown-First Nations relationship by Premier Eby's government. While the Premier seeks to strengthen B.C.'s economic relationships in the Indo-Pacific region and promote investment in major natural resource projects, his government has simultaneously undermined the very rights and relationships that are foundations to sustainable economic development in First Nations territories.

Japan is B.C.'s third-largest export destination, with significant exports including copper and iron ore, LNG, wheat, and wood pellets. Japanese businesses are also investors in natural resource projects across the province, with interests in LNG, energy infrastructure, and mining and critical minerals. The natural resource sectors are inextricably linked to First Nations' land and economic development.

Regional Chief Teegee remains committed to building relationships in Japan and the Indo-Pacific and opening space for future engagement and advocacy for First Nations' inclusion and participation in long-term trade interests and investment.

Regional Chief Terry Teegee stated, "How can we participate in trade missions to promote resource development when this government has just rammed through legislation that tramples our rights and threatens our territories? We will not compromise the progress First Nations have made under the *Declaration Act* and will continue to advocate for its full implementation. First Nations must be at the table as global conversations advance around resource investment, regulatory certainty, and trade. Meeting the growing demand for critical minerals, LNG, and forest products requires the meaningful inclusion of the rights and title holders of these lands. During uncertain times, it's imperative that First Nations actively shape economic relationships that impact our lands, peoples, and futures."



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Deputy Chief Harlan Schilling, CEO of The First Nations Centre of Excellence for Economic Development, stated, "Trade and economic development are rooted in relationship and sustainability. First Nations governments have made too much progress to be sidelined by legislation undermining our title, jurisdiction, and the commitments made to us by this province."

The BCAFN continues to assert the right of First Nations to be involved in shaping the future of trade in B.C. and Canada. This includes navigating complex relationships with governments while ensuring that the path forward reflects the rights, responsibilities, and vision of First Nations in B.C.

-30-

The British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) is a Provincial Territorial Organization (PTO) representing the 204 First Nations in British Columbia. BCAFN representation is inclusive and extends to First Nations currently engaged in the treaty process, those who have signed modern treaties, and those who fall under historic treaty agreements, including the Douglas Treaties and Treaty 8.

For further information, contact:

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