



STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

October 18, 2020

BC Assembly of First Nations condemns escalating acts of destruction, violence and intimidation directed at Mi'kmaq fishers and calls for federal action

(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George, BC – October 18, 2020) – The Regional Chief and Board of Directors of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) continues to stand in support and unity with the Sipekne'katik First Nation and are calling on Prime Minister Trudeau and Political Parties to condemn and take action against the escalating destruction, violence and intimidation against the Mi'kmaq people. The country has witnessed recent events unfold as the RCMP have responded with apathy and inaction. The federal government must immediately act and ensure the enforcement of Canadian laws to protect Mi'kmaq communities and their ability to exercise their constitutionally protected treaty rights to earn a moderate living from fishing. Action must be taken now.

As Canadians witness events unfold in the Atlantic lobster fishery dispute it has become even more apparent that the standard of justice and law enforcement in Canada are deeply flawed and corrupted by systemic racism. Little action has been taken to prosecute the criminal behaviour of those inciting hatred and terror and who have created an environment of lawlessness and violence. Without immediate action from the highest level of government the BCAFN fears for the lives and safety of the Mi'kmaq people.

The BCAFN has worked hard toward reconciliation and support meaningful dialogue and respect for the rights, title and jurisdictions of First Nations in B.C. Political and community action to further the ideals of this long-sought commitment have moved forward significantly. However, the RCMP's failure to uphold the Canadian Constitution and the honour of the Crown in Mi'kmaq territory threatens to unravel years and decades of this work. It is within the federal government's power to prevent this from happening.

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