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## **NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**April 22, 2021**

### **REGIONAL CHIEF TEEGEE APPLAUDS CONVICTION OF CHAUVIN, EMPHASIZES NEED FOR POLICE REFORM**

**(Lheidli T'enneh Territory – APRIL 22, 2021)** – In May of 2020, the largest civil rights demonstrations in United States history took place. The catalyst was the murder of George Floyd, a black man, by a white police officer Derek Chauvin, in Minneapolis. A nine-minute video, in which Chauvin uses his knee to apply pressure to the back of Floyd's neck, eventually killing him, eyewitnesses, and an autopsy concluded the cause of death to be "homicide" were enough evidence for the jury to unanimously convict Chauvin on all counts, including one count of second-degree murder, one count of third-degree murder and one count of manslaughter.

BC Regional Chief Terry Teegee is pleased with the convictions; however, he emphasizes that the pressure for police and judicial reform cannot let up. Earlier this month, in the same city that Floyd was murdered, Daunte Wright, another black man, was shot dead by a white police officer. Indigenous and other racialized people in Canada are all too familiar with police brutality and adverse outcomes in the judicial system. Regional Chief Teegee cites the increased discretion of police officers to card citizens under the new BC Provincial Health Order that comes into effect on April 23<sup>rd</sup> as cause for concern and a flagrant disregard for using an Indigenous lens when developing new orders, considering the deadly outcomes that Indigenous people disproportionately face when dealing with police.

"Despite the celebration of the guilty conviction on all counts of Derek Chauvin, systemic racism still exists in Canada and the United States; the death of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officer highlights the need for police and judicial system overhaul. An overhaul is the only pathway to achieving true justice for racialized people who can be brutalized by the legal system," stated Regional Chief Teegee.

Piecemeal legislative reform, such as Bill C-22, will not rectify the adversity that racialized Canadians, particularly Indigenous peoples, face in the judicial system. Regional Chief Teegee implores Canada and the provinces to engage immediately to make significant, sweeping legislative and policy changes that will prevent further racially motivated deaths and physical, psychological, and social violence.

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