



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### BCAFN 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Special Chiefs Assembly Ends Today

*(Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.)* – The BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) met online, due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, for two days this week with First Nations Chiefs, leaders, Knowledge Keepers, youth, women, 2SLGBTQIA+ peoples, and community members for the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Special Chiefs Assembly. Featured keynote speakers included, Ashley Callingbull (Mrs. Universe, actress, activist), Dr. Evan Adams (Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Public Health, First Nation and Inuit Health Branch, Indigenous Services Canada), and Carey Price (Montreal Canadiens Goaltender). A total 286 people registered for the event.

“First Nations leaders in British Columbia are working hard to bring attention and resolution to the many critical issues, most ongoing but many new and developing struggles, impacting First Nations communities. In particular, climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, illicit drug toxicity deaths, emergency management, homelessness, justice, and so many other urgent matters,” stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee. “This annual event is a crucial opportunity to gather and update, inform, discuss, support, and advance action.”

Additional notable addresses included Minister Marc Miller (Crown-Indigenous Relations), AFN National Chief RoseAnne Archibald, Minister Patty Hajdu (Indigenous Services Canada), and Minister David Lametti (Justice and Attorney General of Canada). Updates and information were provided on the work being done regarding children and families, BCAFN governance, First Nations education, implementation of the *Declaration Act on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency management, climate change, First Nations Public Service Secretariat, justice, economic development, cannabis, and residential schools. A number of resolutions were brought forward to advance vital work to be accomplished in these areas.

*The Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA) is a duly convened political meeting where BCAFN membership may determine the mandate and direction of the BCAFN.*

Additional Information:

BCAFN 18th Annual Special Chiefs Assembly events website: <https://events.bcafn.ca/special-chiefs-assembly-2022/>

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