

## CANDIDATE PROFILE

Cheryl Casimer (ʔaqʔsmaknik pičak paʔkiy) is a citizen of the Ktunaxa Nation and is from the community of ʔaqam, which is located near Cranbrook, BC. Cheryl is a former Chief of the ʔaqam First Nation and has also served her community as a member of Council and has worked to address fundamental title and rights issues and has supported various types of negotiations. Cheryl is a mother of three and a grandmother of five. She currently resides in Ts'il Kaz Koh (Burns Lake) with her partner Chief Dan George.



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### *Local Initiatives and Accomplishments*

Cheryl is a longstanding advocate for First Nations issues and inclusiveness of perspectives. She is committed to building better bridges of understanding and to respecting and upholding various approaches to resolving challenges. Cheryl has dedicated her professional career to supporting communities at the local and national levels. Early in her career she directed her efforts to supporting children and families, serving first as a board member and later as President of the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Society (KKCFSS).

Over the past 20 years, Cheryl has gone on to serve on numerous boards and committees, including one term as Co-Chair of the First Nations Summit (2002-2004) in which she worked alongside First Nations, facilitating complex discussions and supporting leadership with solutions-oriented approaches. Cheryl has also served one term as a board member of the BC Assembly of First Nations. Since 2013, Cheryl has served as an elected member of the First Nations Summit Political Executive. In that role, she has spent many years carefully listening to First Nations and implementing their direction through advocacy and other activities related to Aboriginal Title and Rights and treaty negotiations, in addition to her work to address other issues of common concern to First Nations in BC as an active member of the First Nations Leadership Council, working collaboratively with the political executive of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the BC Assembly of First Nations since 2013.

### *Regional and National Initiatives and Accomplishments*

At the regional and national levels, Cheryl has brought experience and knowledge to address long-standing issues and challenges faced by a number of our First Nations communities. In her role as a member of the First Nations Summit Political Executive, Cheryl acts as a Summit lead on various files including the Implementation of the Commitment Document; Indigenous Health Matters; Children and Families; Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls; Disability Issues and Urban Aboriginal Services. Cheryl is also currently a member of the BC Minister's Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee. Nationally, Cheryl has consistently met with federal government representatives to advocate for issues impacting First Nations in BC. Nationally, Cheryl has advocated on issues of common concern at meetings of the Assembly of First Nations.

On the international stage, Cheryl has raised awareness at sessions of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. On numerous occasions, Cheryl has been a panelist at UN sessions and has given interventions and made submissions on a variety of issues.