



Vancouver, British Columbia  
April 22-24

Our Gathering • kexwkexwntsút chet  
• tə sqəqíp ct • 2024

# SUMMARY REPORT



BC Assembly of First Nations



First Nations Summit



Union of BC Indian Chiefs

Canada

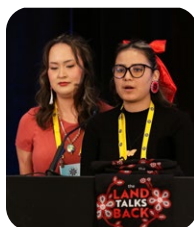
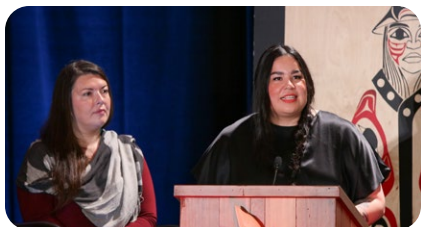


## Event Summary

Our Gathering 2024, kexwkexwntsút chet, tə sǫǫǫp ct, was held April 22-24, 2024, on the unceded, traditional, ancestral territories of the Coast Salish peoples, the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), and sə́ilwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations at the J.W. Marriott Parq Hotel in Vancouver, British Columbia.

This year marked the 11th gathering, co-hosted by the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), which is comprised of the First Nations Summit, the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations, together with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC). The event was planned with event management support from Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council.

1,010 participants attended the three-day event, including 220 virtual attendees. Among the participants were First Nations Chiefs, Councillors, administrators, Elders and youth representing 140 First Nation communities, 11 Tribal Councils, delegates from various Indigenous organizations, other government departments, and members from the FNLC.





# Highlights

## Agenda

- » Co-developed with FNLC, ISC and CIRNAC, the agenda included 5 plenary sessions and 18 interactive breakout sessions.
- » Some of the key topics covered were child and family services, education jurisdiction, MMIWG2S+, housing and homelessness, the toxic drug emergency, First Nations climate action, redesign of the additions to reserve policy and economic reconciliation.
- » From the Regional Chief to Ministers, senior management, and experts, delegates were there to listen, present and support the event.



## Ministerial Attendance

- » For the first time, three federal ministers attended Our Gathering, to engage in direct dialogue with attendees, listen to feedback and respond to Q&As.
- » The Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services, joined BCAFN Regional Chief Terry Teegee and Chief Dan Manuel from Upper Nicola Band on a panel discussion regarding water legislation.
- » The Honourable Gary Anandasangaree, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, highlighted achievements on specific claims agreements and drew attention to the Red Dress Alert initiative.
- » The Honourable Arif Virani, Minister of Justice and Attorney General, together with FNLC, provided an update on the *UN Declaration Act's* federal Action Plan.



## Elders' Tea Reflections

- » Elders were invited to share advice and wisdom with First Nations delegates, ISC and CIRNAC staff on the topic of Leadership in Community.
- » Reflecting on past traumas of the Indian Day Schools and Residential Schools, the Elders called for unity, healing, forgiveness, education and being grounded in cultural roots.
- » Artist Tiaré Lani captured their sentiments in an infographic art piece that was discussed in a plenary on the last day.



## Youth Activities

- » 42 youth delegates from 37 communities attended Our Gathering.
- » Alyssa Wapanatahk of Story Medicine recounted her experiences of working as a young actress, writer and filmmaker in an industry not often reflective of Indigenous people.
- » Youth delegates also participated in a collaborative painting session with Coast Salish artist Maynard Johnny Jr.



## Fashion Show

- » For the first time at Our Gathering, Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week, in partnership with Canadian Heritage, presented All Our Relations.
- » The dazzling fashion show featured emerging and established Indigenous designers while DJ Kookum and throat singers PIQSIQ performed at the event.



## Open House / Exhibitor Fair

- » Over 55 partners from Indigenous organizations and other government departments hosted information booths.
- » Participants had an opportunity to meet with ISC and CIRNAC staff through the Ask Me Booth as well as visit the Secure Certificate of Indian Status intake booth to submit their status card applications.
- » An exciting addition this year included a virtual reality display of the BC Indigenous Sports Hall of Fame from the BC Sports Hall of Fame.



## Indigenous Artisan Display

- » Another successful feature was the Indigenous artisans' display with 20 artisans, showcasing jewelry, clothing, arts and crafts.



## Cultural Presentations

- » Each day, the event began in a good way. Carleen Thomas from Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Elder Sam George or Elder Bob Baker, from Squamish Nation offered a greeting, prayer or a drumming song each morning.
- » Chesha7 iy Iha muns, a group of four generations of mothers and daughters from Squamish Nation shared songs and stories showcasing their rich cultural diversity.
- » Also, over the course of three days, staff from the Indian Residential School Survivors Society were on site to provide emotional support and cultural brushings to attendees.



## Outreach

- » The event was livestreamed to a virtual audience of about 220.
- » In partnership with Nautsa' mawt Tribal Council, the HAWK Communications App was used as the official app for the event.
- » Presentations from each of the sessions can be accessed via the App through the Apple Store or Google Play Store.
- » Participants were encouraged to post information, ideas and thoughts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using the hashtags #OurGathering2024, #kexwkexwntsútchet, and #təsqəqípt.



## Speakers Corner

- » At Speaker's Corner, participants were invited to share stories and experiences through a video-taped session about what was heard at Our Gathering.
- » Among the participants were Minister Anandasangaree, Regional Chief Teegee and Chief Don Tom from Tsartlip First Nation.



- » Overall, participants were very satisfied with the venue, registration, speakers, and relevance of sessions.
- » The most popular plenary sessions were:
  1. Specific claims
  2. UNDA
  3. Education jurisdiction
- » The most popular breakout sessions were:
  1. Revitalizing First Nations languages, arts, cultures and heritage
  2. MMIWG2S+
  3. Child and family services long-term reform tied with returning land to First Nations
- » Proposed topics for next Our Gathering:
  1. Women in leadership
  2. First Nations showcasing success in partnerships, innovation and projects
  3. Emergency management



## Thank you | huy chexw a | huy ch q'u

On behalf of the First Nations Leadership Council, ISC and CIRNAC, thank you for your participation in Our Gathering 2024 kexwkexwntsút chet, tə sǵǵǵip ct. Also, we wish to thank Masters of Ceremony, Cara Basil and Jessie Hemphill for moderating the event and Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council for providing event support and logistics. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to come together to create new relationships, strengthen existing ones, share best practices, and engage in dialogue to advance the interests of First Nations in British Columbia.

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