

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

News Release

October 25, 2026

FNLC Calls for Newly Elected B.C. Conservatives to Uphold Title and Rights and Keep DRIPA as Framework for Reconciliation

(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) The B.C. Conservative Party has won a majority government in the snap provincial election on October 24th. The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) is ready to work with the incoming government to advance reconciliation and uphold title and rights, as mandated by First Nations in B.C. and as required by the common law, Canadian jurisprudence and Canada's Constitution.

By a notable coincidence, on October 24th, 2019, the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Declaration Act or DRIPA) was introduced, widely supported and unanimously passed in the legislature. A key failure of Premier Eby's NDP Government lay in its inability to clearly communicate a transparent and accountable implementation plan for the Declaration Act, which contributed to the spread of misinformation and fear. Despite this, the historic legislation provides a framework to advance reconciliation and achieve certainty in B.C. through upholding the pre-existing rights of First Nations, including human rights affirmed in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. First Nations continue to support the framework for reconciliation in the Declaration Act as a meaningful and constructive path forward.

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, UBCIC President, stated, "The massive defeat of former Premier David Eby and his government is hugely disappointing to First Nations in B.C., particularly given Premier-Designate Lorne Doerksen's promise to rip up the Declaration Act. We are at a historical crossroads: Battleground B.C. or reconciliation through the principles and road map of the Declaration Act. I am also deeply concerned that the climate emergency will be exacerbated with the development bonanza that has been promised and am prepared to do everything I can to protect our precious earth, water and air. I want to thank the B.C. NDP for working with First Nations to co-develop the unprecedented Declaration Act and meeting us at the table."

"OneBC, a fringe far-right party and the previous Conservative Leader Kerry-Lynn Findlay, both campaigned on anti-Indigenous racism, and both have been ousted from BC politics. British Columbians voted overwhelmingly against hateful and divisive politics, including the wrongful denial of the painful truths shared by Residential School Survivors," stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee. "We call on Premier-Designate Doerksen to uphold a zero-tolerance policy for racism, discrimination or hatred in his caucus, including holding his members accountable for some of the reprehensible statements made during the election. We also expect the new government to work meaningfully with all First Nations based on the recognition of our inherent title and rights."

Chief Shana Thomas, First Nations Summit Political Executive, stated "As the original occupants of these lands, First Nations in B.C. enjoy unceded and constitutionally protected title and rights, and treaty rights, and we must be involved in any decisions that impact our territories. There are no economic projects in this province with the beautiful natural resources found here, that can



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happen without involvement of First Nations. There is significant work ahead. We expect to hear as soon as possible that this government is committed to continuing with the First Nations Leadership Gathering as an upcoming and critical opportunity to establish a strong foundation to our relationship.”

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The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), First Nations Summit (FNS), and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).

For further comment please contact:

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