



Carrier Sekani Tribal Council

News Release
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CSTC Celebrates the 5th Annual Anniversary of the UN Declaration

Dakelh Territory, Prince George, British Columbia, Canada. Today marks the 5th year anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration). The CSTC is in full support of First Nations in Canada to demand that the federal government work with us to *fully* implement the UN Declaration, without limitations.

Tribal Chief Terry Teegee stated, "In 2010 Canada finally endorsed the UN Declaration, but our First Nations have not seen any changes to how the Crown upholds its honor in protecting First Nations rights and title." Teegee continued, "Projects require the free, prior and informed consent from First Nations before they are approved. The Northern Gateway project is a prime example of how the federal government is not living up to the UN Declaration." First Nations need to provide full consent prior to projects being approved, and processes such as the Joint Review Panel need to be developed in partnership with First Nations. Otherwise these processes are meaningless and do not live up to First Nations expectations and laws.

The Harper government needs to show environmental stewardship and leadership. "Canada has lost its moral authority around the world for how it treats First Nations peoples," stated Vice Tribal Chief Dolly Abraham. She continued, "Our lands are not for sale. Our waters that sustain all life are under threat from industry and climate change. The UN Declaration is not an aspirational document. It is an international standard that supports our indigenous laws of environmental stewardship and decision-making. Canadians should be calling their MLAs to tell them to implement the UN Declaration with First Nations."

Several of the CSTC First Nations, such as the Nadleh Whut'en, are developing policies that are based on their traditional laws, and seek to show how the UN Declaration can be implemented. Chief Martin Louie of the Nadleh Whut'en First Nation and Yinka Dene Alliance said, "The UN Declaration is very important because it supports our traditional laws and outlines an international standard for human rights. Canadians need to understand that Canada was built on colonial policies of genocide. First Nations people are recovering and rebuilding our nations and cultures. We have an opportunity to show the world how we can spend the next seven generations healing our relationships with each other and with the land."

"The UN Declaration needs to be supported by BC and local governments. Implementation will impact how decisions are made in our territories and over many jurisdictions", noted Tribal Chief Teegee. He concluded, "The CSTC will continue to support the implementation of the UN Declaration, and we acknowledge all the work that went into its creation. But, now the heavy lifting begins to ensure that our human rights are protected, and that everyone benefits from having just and equitable laws and decision-making processes with First Nations in Canada and BC."

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