

News Release



Union of BC Indian Chiefs

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Carrier Sekani Tribal Council

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UBCIC and Carrier Sekani Tribal Council Withdraw from BC's Missing Women Commission of Inquiry

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Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver, BC – This morning the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC) informed the office of Commissioner Wally Oppal, Q.C of their formal withdrawal from the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry.

“Initially, the UBCIC was deeply troubled by the extremely narrow and restrictive terms of reference, the tight timelines and was shocked by the unilateral appointment of BC’s former Attorney-General Wally Oppal as Commissioner,” said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the UBCIC. “From the start, it appeared there was an incredibly low and impenetrable funding ceiling for this Inquiry. In truth, the decisions and sheer hypocrisy of the Christy Clark Government have effectively slammed the door to this Inquiry.”

Terry Teegee, Vice Tribal Chief of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council stated “Premier Christy Clark recently hosted a First Minister’s meeting where she stated publicly that the safety of First Nation women was of paramount concern. If that is the case, we must learn from the errors of the past. We must listen to those families who endured the silence of authorities when their loved ones went missing. We must pursue answers to the many questions of the missing and murdered women not only in Vancouver but along the Highway of Tears in the North.” Teegee further stated, “This was an opportunity for the Christy Clark Government to demonstrate that the safety of First Nation women, and their families, matter to this government. With the full involvement of all the participants, this Inquiry, and the full and meaningful implementation of its recommendations, could have been a small but significant measure of justice.”

“We thank Commissioner Oppal for his efforts to expand the scope of the Inquiry and to seek the necessary resources from the Province to allow all participants to contribute equally to the Inquiry,” said Grand Chief Phillip. “Our hearts and prayers go out to the families who lost their loved ones and to their many friends who worked hard with community organizations for a full and exhaustive inquiry to address their many concerns. We continue our commitment to them and to work with them to ensure justice will one day be served. We will not abandon them.”

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