

# OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

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April 2, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Via Email: [pm@pm.gc.ca](mailto:pm@pm.gc.ca)

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Via Email: [ec.ministre-minister.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.ministre-minister.ec@canada.ca)

The Honourable Seamus O'Regan  
Minister of Natural Resources  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Via Email: [nrcan.minister-ministre.nrcan@canada.ca](mailto:nrcan.minister-ministre.nrcan@canada.ca)

## **OPEN LETTER: Emergency Relief in Energy Sector Must Not Enable Massive Public Investment in Fossil Fuels**

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau, Minister Wilkinson, and Minister O'Regan,

As you are aware, the global COVID-19 pandemic and the concurrent crash in international oil prices has decimated the price of Canadian oil; its recovery in the coming weeks or months is unlikely with the decreased demand amid global measures to curtail the transmission of COVID-19. We recognize that Canada is taking steps to ensure the safety and economic security of Canadians in this tumultuous time, and we are aware that your government is negotiating a bailout of Canada's oil and gas sector. We strongly feel that the urgent need for emergency relief should not enable massive public investment in fossil fuels. While Canada acts to address the current crises, the urgency of the climate crisis cannot be overlooked.

Through Resolution 2016-06, the UBCIC Chiefs Council called for Canada to take action to reduce fossil fuel production and export, and to support the development of clean renewable energy. We urge that any emergency stimulation of the Canadian energy sector prioritizes a just transition away from oil dependence through the following:

- Mitigate existing and future environmental liabilities by funding remediation of abandoned oil wells and tailings ponds in partnership with affected Indigenous Nations
- Invest in public clean energy projects and infrastructure in partnership with Indigenous Nations, and support education, research, and job training in the clean energy sector to ease transition for workers
- Stipulate that any oil and gas companies receiving a publicly funded bailout must scale down production by meeting attainable interim emissions targets before 2030.

The decline of Canada's oil industry will continue regardless of your government's intervention; prolonging it will only contribute to worsening the climate crisis. Now is the time to make tangible and lasting progress toward reducing the country's emissions in a manner that both provides relief from the impacts of COVID-19 and that respects and upholds Indigenous Title and Rights and Treaty Rights, the needs of workers, and the millions of people who are imperiled by the recklessness of the world's polluters.

**On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS**



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip  
President



Chief Don Tom  
Vice-President



Kukpi7 Judy Wilson  
Secretary-Treasurer