

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

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April 29, 2019

UBCIC Chiefs Council
Via Email and Facsimile

RE: Invitation to UBCIC Symposium on Negotiations and Agreement-Making

Dear Chief and Council:

We are pleased to invite you to a two-day province-wide symposium that offers a platform for discussion, engagement, and action planning for UBCIC members regarding negotiations and agreement-making beyond the BC Treaty Commission (BCTC) process. The symposium will take place at the River Rock Casino Resort, x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam), Richmond B.C. on May 22-23, 2019.

This two-day symposium will allow First Nations across the province to review emerging approaches to negotiations, contribute their input and ideas, and collaboratively develop new approaches and frameworks to Nation-to-Nation or tripartite negotiations that adhere to the standards of recognition and reconciliation ratified in the *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) and *Tsilhqot'in Nation v British Columbia*. The focus will be on advancing innovation and effectiveness in how negotiations take place and the substance of agreements that are reached. The symposium will not address negotiations within the confines of the BCTC process, but rather will focus on reviewing and identifying the foundational principles and practices for negotiating new models of recognition, consent and rights-based agreements for decision making and upholding Indigenous laws and jurisdiction.

For decades, UBCIC has advocated for principled approaches to negotiations and agreement-making focused on the recognition and implementation of Title and Rights and grounded in Indigenous self-determination. In support of this, UBCIC has advanced new frameworks for negotiations, supported Nations resolving matters through agreements, and opposed models that extinguish, surrender, modify, release, or risk the infringement of rights through agreements.

UBCIC Resolution 2016-02, "Upholding the Title and Rights of Indigenous peoples of BC Not Participating in BCTC," and Resolution 2016-25, "Moving Beyond the BCTC Process," collectively

outlined the significant challenges and risks of the agreement-making and negotiation process of the British Columbia Treaty Commission (BCTC), highlighting how further action must be sought to uphold the Title and Rights of Indigenous peoples in BC not involved with the BCTC or treaty negotiations. As part of this work, a review of all non-treaty reconciliation and decision-making agreement models in British Columbia was conducted, including an assessment of the progress they made and recommendations where further progress was needed.

Based on the work and outcomes of these resolutions, UBCIC then endorsed Resolution 2016-30 “UBCIC Political and Legal Action Plan: Moving Beyond the BCTC Process” which proposed six strategies with concrete actions for moving forward into proper negotiations based on the recognition and implementation of Aboriginal Title and Rights. The symposium will build off these strategies, actions, and discussion around agreement-making and negotiation processes towards self-determination.

The symposium will be critical to realizing new and detailed approaches to negotiations and agreement-making that fundamentally uphold Indigenous Title and Rights, consent and Indigenous laws and jurisdiction. First Nations who are dealing with challenges in achieving success in negotiations, including completing principled agreements, obtaining results in a timely manner, incorporating UN Declaration standards into agreement-models, and handling overlaps or potential infringements from agreements being completed by others will have the opportunity to share their experiences and provide direction on the development of new models and frameworks of negotiations. Importantly, the symposium will generate actions and strategies that help safeguard the un-ceded territorial lands of Indigenous peoples and address issues such as the resolution of overlapping and shared territory disputes that manifest in negotiations and agreement-making.

We are pleased to be able to reimburse for travel and accommodations for the symposium. Please find a draft agenda attached. Please register: https://www.ubcic.bc.ca/ubcic_symposium_may_2019.

On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip
President



Kukpi7 Judy Wilson
Secretary-Treasurer