

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

FOUNDING HEAD OFFICE
209 - 345 Chief Alex Thomas Way
Kamloops, B.C. V2H 1H1
Tel: 250-828-9746
Fax: 250-828-0319



VANCOUVER OFFICE
401 - 312 Main Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6A 2T2
Tel: 604-684-0231
Fax: 604-684-5726
1-800-793-9701
Email: ubcic@ubcic.bc.ca
Web: www.ubcic.bc.ca

News Release

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Black Lives Matter: UBCIC Stands in Solidarity Against Racialized Police Brutality and Inaction

((X^wməθk^wəy^əm (Musqueam), Sk^wxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətaʔt/səliłwitulh (Tseil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C. – June 4, 2020) UBCIC is calling for broad action to dismantle systems of white supremacy upheld by policing institutions. The killing of George Floyd by a police officer in Minnesota has once more laid bare the rampant racism in so-called North America, made up of countries built upon a colonial history of Black enslavement and the genocide of Indigenous peoples. The Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) recognizes the shared colonial legacy of oppression that generations of Indigenous and Black people in Canada and the United States experience today as institutionalized racism, police brutality, state violence and inaction.

UBCIC stands in solidarity with Black communities coming together locally and internationally to protest the systems that perpetuate a cycle of hate, distrust, and colonial violence. We recognize this cycle cannot be broken without transformative social change to support communities. This change requires the redirection of resources and attention currently spent policing our communities in favour of services, resources, and programming to strengthen communities.

“UBCIC joins the world in expressing profound sorrow and anger over the unnecessary, racist deaths of two more black citizens, George Floyd in Minneapolis and Regis Korchinski-Paquet in Toronto,” stated Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. “We know too well the consequences of unchecked police violence in our communities. Dale Culver was an Indigenous man who, unarmed, died in Prince George while being arrested by five RCMP officers in 2017. Only this week did British Columbia’s Independent Investigations Office finally recommend the five police officers be charged for their excessive use of force and obstruction of justice. We must find justice from transformative change rather than relying on the systems that kill us and abuse us to deliver it. Our focus must be on making our communities stronger, and on making policing them obsolete. The delayed justice in the deaths of George Floyd, like Dale Culver, is a

testament to how colonial institutions turn a blind eye to racism and perpetuate the oppression and genocide of our communities.”

“To Indigenous and Black people, police represent not justice, security, and integrity, but fear, surveillance, and violence. In both Canada and America, police originated as agents of colonization, complicit with legal systems that upheld white supremacy. Police helped enact genocidal and racist laws and policies – from Jim Crow to the Indian residential school system – to establish themselves as perpetrators of Indigenous genocide and enforcers of anti-Black law,” stated Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer of UBCIC. “The senseless death of George Floyd impresses upon on us all the gravity of this racist legacy, reminding us that racism is a deadly force that pervades policing culture. If left unchecked, it will continue to falsify police brutality and willful negligence as justice. UBCIC firmly supports the Black Lives Matter movement in their work against police brutality and racial inequality.”

“The time is now to address and dismantle the racist foundations of policing. Anti-Black racism is not only an American problem, but one that needs to be challenged in Canada alongside anti-Indigenous racism,” concluded Don Tom, Vice-President of UBCIC. “UBCIC calls upon Canada to resume its implementation of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Action Plan. In the year since the release of the plan, Indigenous women remain the fastest growing prison population and regular targets for sexualized violence by police officers, with no movement from Canada to meaningfully address the Calls for Justice. Inaction is unacceptable. We demand justice for Dale Culver. We demand justice for George Floyd. We demand justice for Regis Korchinski-Paquet. We demand justice for the countless and unheard victims of racism, police brutality, and state-sanctioned apathy. Most importantly, we demand change.”

Media inquiries:

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of UBCIC: (250-490-5314)

Chief Don Tom, Vice-President of UBCIC: (604-290-6083)

Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer of UBCIC: (250-320-7738)

UBCIC is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

For more information please visit www.ubcic.bc.ca