



News Release

May 11, 2021

RCMP Shoot Tla-o-qui-aht Woman on Mother's Day Weekend: Indigenous Leadership Furious with Ongoing Police Brutality

(Tla-o-qui-aht Territory and Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) On May 8th, a Tla-o-qui-aht mother of two was shot by the RCMP after they responded to a call for help. The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation and the First Nations Leadership Council are calling for an immediate, transparent and transformative response which includes the Tla-o-qui-aht community at every step of the way.

Chief Moses Martin, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, stated “Our community and our families are completely devastated. The woman who was shot by the RCMP is in critical condition and this is the third recent shooting by the RCMP of one of our people - our population is approximately 1,150 people. Needless to say, we are experiencing heavy trauma and shock. We are frustrated that we are being told to wait for the investigation, which could take months. We will be seeking support for the family and we will also be seeking interim measures with the RCMP and the IIO.” The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Hereditary Chiefs and Elected Council issued a [statement](#) demanding changes to the justice system following the RCMP shooting of 26 year old TFN member and mother Chantel Moore on June 4, 2020; they are still waiting for the changes they asked for.

“What will it take to make the tragedies stop? The use of lethal force by Canadian police forces against Indigenous peoples is a deadly epidemic in Canada. There have been numerous inquiries, studies, reports, and a First Nations Justice Strategy in BC created to address the need for justice reform. Despite this, our citizens continue to be the victims of unnecessary police violence leading to serious injury or death as a result of police shootings. The lack of action on implementing proposed solutions will only lead to more of our citizens being injured or dying. The time for police reform is now,” said Lydia Hwitsum of the FNS Political Executive.

This shooting comes just three months after the fatal police shooting of Julian Jones, another Tla-o-qui-aht member, reaffirming the numerous calls by the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation and Indigenous leaders across the country for substantial police reform to address the systemic racism and violence that is evidenced every time we have another Indigenous person shot by the police. These calls have included the reallocation of police funding to support de-escalation and trauma informed services, the appointment of an Indigenous person to the IIO processes, and the implementation of First Nations-led police services and forces.

“Our prayers go out to the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation and the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation who are facing yet another police shooting, while still managing the trauma and grief of the shootings of Julian Jones and Chantel Moore with no response to previous calls,” stated Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, secretary-treasurer of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. “We refuse to sit idly by and be silent while our people continue to be shot and murdered. We demand immediate action and full transparency by the police and the Independent Investigations Office in this investigation including a full review of the detachment, and the implementation of all calls put forward following previous shootings. Our thoughts are also with this young mother as she undergoes treatment and healing, and demand

necessary resources be put in place to support her, her family and her community in dealing with this trauma.”

Regional Chief Terry Teegee, BC Assembly of First Nations, stated “Unlawful use of force and the ongoing deaths, injuries and devastation to First Nations is never ending. Police brutality must stop now. The deadly cycle of violence is largely fuelled by systemic racism and we look to Canadian leadership to urgently make the transformative changes that will provide all people with protection of the right to life, liberty and security, and which will build stability to our society as a whole.”

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The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation and Administration is located on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, in Tofino, British Columbia. The Tla-o-qui-aht Nation and its people, are a nation with over 1200 Members. The Administration is comprised of about 50 employees that continues to grow as the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation's Lands, Economic, and local growth continues. As a traditionally strong nation, our teachings continue to honour our traditional Governance of our Ha'wiih (Hereditary Chiefs), and in doing so we provide service to our members to care, and promote our traditional values. For more information <https://www.tla-o-qui-aht.org/>

The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), First Nations Summit (FNS), and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).

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