

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

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Statement

May 10, 2021

UBCIC Supports UN Committee's Call on Canada to Protect Mi'kmaq Fishers and Investigate Claims of Racist Violence

((X^wməθk^wəy^əm (Musqueam), Sk^wxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliwətał (Tseil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C. – May 10, 2021) After reviewing the information submitted to them by Sipekne'katik fishers under their Early Warning and Urgent Action Procedure, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has officially called on Canada to investigate the acts of violence, hate, and discrimination that were perpetrated against Mi'kmaq fisher men and women last fall.

The Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) continues to stand by and support the Mi'kmaq Nation who filed a formal submission to CERD after it was made evident that the federal and provincial governments and local law enforcement would not sufficiently intervene to protect them from the dangerous attempts by non-Indigenous residents to hinder their fishing activities and deny their constitutionally affirmed fishing rights. By Resolution 2020-33, the UBCIC Chiefs-in-Assembly have condemned any actions meant to de-legitimize and undermine the Mi'kmaq right to earn a moderate living from fishing and called upon Canada to adopt a firm and clear stance in defending the recognized legal fishing rights of First Nations across Canada.

In light of CERD's request for Canada's accountability, UBCIC renews our calls for Canada to safeguard the unextinguished fishing rights of the Mi'kmaq Nation and to prosecute any illegal protest or criminal behavior from those seeking to undermine these rights. UBCIC further urges Canada to comply with CERD and respond to the allegations of racist violence against the Mi'kmaq fishers, including investigating the lack of response by government and authorities to protect the Mi'kmaq and their rights, by the July 29, 2021 deadline.

Media inquiries:

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President, 250-490-5314

Chief Don Tom, Vice-President, 250-813-3315

Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer, c/o 604-842-2977

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