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Canada, British Columbia and First Nations Summit sign accord committing to changing BC treaty negotiations

VANCOUVER – Today the Principals of the BC treaty negotiations process, the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia, and the First Nations Summit, signed the *Principals' Accord on Transforming Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia*. This Accord further strengthens the goals of treaty negotiations: recognition and protection of Aboriginal title and rights, nation-building, and establishing a government-to-government relationship.

“The Treaty Commission has long advocated for fundamental change to treaty negotiations,” said Chief Commissioner Celeste Haldane. “The Principals need to ensure that the commitments in the Accord become real, ensuring immediate changes at treaty tables and become a priority for all departments across government.”

Aboriginal title and rights are a legal interest and must be recognized and treated as such if changes to government policies are to be effective and live up to the commitments in the Accord. Treaty negotiations are the best means to establish this legal and constitutional recognition of title and rights.

The Accord also acknowledges that treaty negotiations must reflect the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Treaty Commission has focused on the importance of the UN Declaration in treaty negotiations for the last several years.

The Treaty Commission congratulates the Principals for signing the Accord and looks forward to supporting the implementation of these important commitments.

Quick Facts

- In January 2018, the Principals expanded the Treaty Commission’s mandate: “Through its role in facilitating treaty negotiations, BCTC will support the implementation of the UN Declaration, the TRC’s 94 Calls to Action, the federal Principles, and the recognition of First Nations right and title.”
- The Treaty Commission’s 2018 annual report highlights some of the proposed federal and provincial policy changes and how are treaty negotiations are also leading some of these innovations. Read it at www.bctreaty.ca

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About the BC Treaty Commission

The Treaty Commission is the independent body responsible for overseeing treaty negotiations among the governments of Canada, BC and First Nations in BC. It has three roles: facilitation, funding, and public information and education.

Visit www.bctreaty.ca to learn more about the Treaty Commission.