

For Immediate Release

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BC Government pulls its Commitment at the Eleventh Hour

VANCOUVER— Thursday March 19, 2015. Yesterday the Treaty Commission learned that the Government of British Columbia will not move forward with the appointment of George Abbott, who was selected six months ago as the next Chief Commissioner of the BC Treaty Commission. Abbott was set to start when current Chief Commissioner Sophie Pierre's term ends on April 1, 2015.

"It is very important to me that there be a smooth transition between Chief Commissioners. I was confident in the decision that the Principals had made, which was also supported by resolution of the Chiefs at the First Nations Summit," says Chief Commissioner Sophie Pierre. "George Abbott is a man of integrity, intelligence and extensive experience who would have benefited the treaty process, First Nations, and all British Columbians."

The parties to the treaty negotiations process have legal commitments to the process and each other. The Treaty Commission supports all agreements that lead to reconciliation – treaties and other agreements. "This retraction of the Chief Commissioner selection after months of agreement, expectation and reliance by the other parties, raises questions about BC's commitment to the treaty negotiations process."

"I stayed on for another three years to give the Principals the opportunity to make this important tripartite appointment, and to pull this away at the eleventh hour questions the commitment of BC – this is not how to effect Reconciliation," says Sophie Pierre.