



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 13, 2016

### **Treaty negotiations embody reconciliation and the UN Declaration**

VANCOUVER – Today the Treaty Commission releases its 2016 annual report: *Treaty Negotiations, Reconciliation, and the UN Declaration*.

The federal government has made reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a priority for all of Canada, including the endorsement of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP or *UN Declaration*).

BCTC's 2016 annual report outlines how modern treaties and the BC negotiations process are consistent with key principles of the UNDRIP and lead to reconciliation. Self-determination is a core goal of treaty negotiations and reflects one of the core values of the *UN Declaration*.

In this year's report, seven First Nations leaders discuss how modern treaties strengthen their path to self-determination, while embodying the UNDRIP. Included in the report are interviews with Grand Chief Edward John, Tla'amin's Hegus Clint Williams, Tsawwassen's Chief Bryce Williams, Toquaht Nation's Chief Anne Mack, Huu-ay-aht First Nations' Councillor John Jack, and Nisga'a Nations' President Mitchell Stevens and Kevin McKay.

"BC treaty negotiations offer an established, successful framework leading to the highest expression of reconciliation: constitutionally entrenched modern treaties," said Acting Chief Commissioner Celeste Haldane. "As the leaders interviewed in this year's report describe, treaties embody self-determination and the principles of the *UN Declaration*. Treaty making in BC is an opportunity for the Governments of Canada, BC, and First Nations to lead the world in reconciliation."

#### **Quick Facts**

- BCTC's 2016 annual report will be available online at [bctreaty.ca](http://bctreaty.ca) at 10:30am.
- Press conference video will be available on our website by early afternoon.
- Active or completed negotiations involve 40 First Nations, representing 78 Indian Act Bands, totalling 38% of all Indian Act Bands in BC.
- In 2016, Tla'amin Nation became the eighth First Nation to implement a modern treaty in BC.

-30-

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Odette Wilson / Communications Advisor / t: 604-482-9215 / c: 604-290-4059 / [owilson@bctreaty.ca](mailto:owilson@bctreaty.ca)  
Mark Smith / Director of Process / t: 604-482-9208 / [msmith@bctreaty.ca](mailto:msmith@bctreaty.ca)

#### **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](http://www.bctreaty.ca) to learn more about the Treaty Commission.