



## For Immediate Release

**April 2, 2015**

### **Treaty Commission embraces expanded mandate**

VANCOUVER– Thursday April 2, 2015. The Treaty Commission is encouraged with the release of the report by Ministerial Special Representative, Douglas R. Eyford, on renewing the Comprehensive Land Claims Policy, *A New Direction: Advancing Aboriginal and Treaty Rights*.

The Treaty Commission considers Mr. Eyford’s recommendation that changes be made to the Treaty Commission as very positive, and looks forward to an expanded mandate to more effectively facilitate progress in treaty negotiations and, where the conclusion of treaties are unlikely, assist the parties in exploring other arrangements to advance reconciliation.

The report is timely given recent statements in the public about the need for change to the Treaty Commission. “We look forward to working with the Principals so that all British Columbians and all Canadians can see a return on the substantial investment made by all the parties to the negotiations process,” said Acting Chief Commissioner Celeste Haldane.

Many of the recommendations made in Eyford’s report are consistent with what the Treaty Commission has been advocating for some time, such as the requirement for a “whole of government” commitment, with high level direction and oversight. “Political will from the highest level of leadership is needed to complete treaties. Without it, British Columbians and Canadians will not be able to benefit from the certainty and economic benefits that reconciliation can bring,” said Celeste Haldane.

The Treaty Commission thanks Doug Eyford for his thorough work and the cooperative nature of the process that led to this report, involving First Nations, the Treaty Commission, and all the partners to the treaty negotiations process.

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