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**New era of Indigenous rights recognition through treaty negotiations**

VANCOUVER – This year marked significant progress in treaty negotiations and rights recognition. Longstanding issues that have burdened the treaty negotiations process are finally addressed through policy changes and assurances from the federal and provincial governments.

Today the Treaty Commission releases its 2019 annual report celebrating the new era of Indigenous rights recognition in BC. The report highlights this year's notable policy and treaty negotiations changes using excerpts from the *Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy for Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia* and the *Principals' Accord on Transforming Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia*.

Since October 2018, seven negotiating tables, representing 21 *Indian Act* bands, advanced to Stage 5 treaty negotiations through agreements based on explicit principles of recognizing and implementing Indigenous rights and title and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. These innovative agreements demonstrate how treaty negotiations are evolving as policies also evolve.

"We are entering an era of Indigenous rights recognition and this recognition will take many forms," said Chief Commissioner Celeste Haldane. "This era represents an opportunity for true reconciliation, recognition of rights, sharing of sovereignty, and sharing prosperity."

On its release, Chief Commissioner Haldane celebrated the Principals' commitment to negotiations: "I am proud to present this year's Treaty Commission annual report and look forward to continuing to work with the Principals to transform treaty negotiations in BC."

**Quick Facts**

- The BC Treaty Commission 2019 annual report is available to read online at [www.bctreaty.ca](http://www.bctreaty.ca)
- There are 29 modern treaties in Canada; 8 are implemented in British Columbia, representing one third of all modern treaties in Canada.
- The federal government announced the elimination of negotiation support loans, and the introduction of non-repayable contribution funding. Canada's federal *Budget 2019: Investing in the Middle Class to Grow Canada's Economy* indicated that outstanding treaty negotiation loans for First Nations across the country would be eliminated.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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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.