



# ***Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act***

## **2019/2020 Annual Report**

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BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

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## MESSAGE FROM PREMIER

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When our government took office in 2017, we firmly committed to working in partnership with Indigenous peoples to make real progress on reconciliation. Together, we made history last fall when we unanimously passed legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – the first province or territory in Canada to do so. The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* provides a path forward on reconciliation – one that respects Indigenous people’s human rights and creates clarity and predictability for all people in British Columbia.

Since that time, the COVID-19 pandemic has tested us in ways we could never have imagined. We have come together and focused on what we need to do to stop the spread of this virus. This does not mean our work has stopped in other important areas to advance reconciliation. In fact, our work to weather the pandemic together has reinforced our commitment to creating a better B.C. for everyone.

During these times of uncertainty, we remain committed to working in partnership to advance reconciliation and are continuing the implementation of the Declaration Act, a key commitment with the BC Green Party Caucus under our Confidence and Supply Agreement.

I am honoured to present the first annual report on the Declaration Act. This report fulfills the legislative requirement laid out in Section 5 of the Act to provide updates on progress each year. This initial report highlights the significant steps we’ve taken to build a strong foundation for implementing the Act by collaborating with Indigenous peoples. The report also acknowledges the accomplishments we’ve achieved and the challenges we’ve faced together in the first four months since the Act came into force. Finally, it speaks to what’s to come, specifically the development of the action plan.

While the global pandemic has changed many things, we remain focused on our work to make tangible and real progress on reconciliation as we restart B.C. We are finding new ways of working with Indigenous peoples as we develop the action plan to be released later this year. The action plan will outline how we will meet the objectives of the UN Declaration, providing transparency and accountability for the work ahead.

Our work together to implement the UN Declaration will take time, but we continue to take important steps forward in collaboration with Indigenous peoples.

On this journey together, we must acknowledge and bring to an end persistent and systemic injustices. We must work together to end the social, economic and political marginalization of Indigenous communities. By recognizing and respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples in all areas of life, we create more opportunities for Indigenous peoples to be full partners in the economy, and a clear, predictable path for everyone to work together.

The work we do now to advance reconciliation will create a better future for Indigenous communities, our province, and our country as a whole.

Honourable John Horgan  
Premier of British Columbia



## INTRODUCTION

In 2017, the provincial government committed to making meaningful advancements toward reconciliation, in partnership with Indigenous peoples, through targeted efforts to adopt and implement the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UN Declaration) and the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action](#). Every Cabinet minister was given this mandate.

Building on that commitment, B.C. worked collaboratively with the First Nations Leadership Council (BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs) to update the [2015 Commitment Document](#) by jointly developing the [Vision and Guiding Principles](#) and [Concrete Actions](#) documents, which outline initial priorities to jointly advance reconciliation in the province. Goal 1, Action 1 within the Concrete Actions document was to co-develop legislation to implement the UN Declaration in B.C.

The introduction of the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) (Declaration Act) was a critical next step to advance reconciliation in the province. The Declaration Act passed unanimously in the B.C. Legislature and became law on November 28, 2019.

*"The legislation will give us a path forward, creating clarity and predictability for all people in British Columbia. By working together, we get better outcomes. That is how we create opportunities for Indigenous peoples, for B.C. businesses, for communities and for families everywhere."*

Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

*"This landmark bill is not only aspirational but includes tangible and practical tools for implementation. We hold up our hands to our ancestors and past leaders for paving the way for this critical work, and we look to our grandchildren, who will enjoy a more certain future."*

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip,  
Union of BC Indian Chiefs

Support for the legislation was widespread, reflecting both the growing consensus in British Columbia that reconciliation is a collective responsibility and an increasing commitment to reconciliation. More than ever before, Indigenous peoples, First Nations, governments, labour, industry and British Columbians from all backgrounds are focused on working together to advance reconciliation.

Through the legislation, the provincial government has tools and mechanisms to collaboratively transform structures and processes so that they are inclusive and respectful of Indigenous human rights. This, in turn, supports growing efforts to work together with Indigenous peoples, which are more critical now than ever.

Creating new arenas of collaboration, leadership and partnership is key to the collective work ahead. Doing so will provide better outcomes, create more certainty and predictability and help to strengthen our shared economy, including helping to generate job opportunities, collaborative business partnerships and a sound landscape for investment.



## UN DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

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Implementing the UN Declaration is a shared priority between the Province and Indigenous peoples. Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007, the UN Declaration includes 46 articles covering all facets of the human rights of Indigenous peoples such as culture, identity, religion, language, health, education and community.

The UN Declaration does not create new rights. It upholds the same human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law. It also re-affirms the importance of the principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, equality, non-discrimination, good governance and good faith.

*“Upholding and protecting human rights is an essential step in our collective journey of reconciliation.”*

Ry Moran, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission called on all governments in Canada to fully adopt and implement the UN Declaration as a framework for reconciliation.



## DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ACT

In 2018, the Province and the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) pledged to collaboratively develop landmark legislation to implement the UN Declaration in B.C. The FNLC and the Province assigned Indigenous lawyers and legal experts as part of a technical team to develop the legislation through an iterative and collaborative process. Such collaboration on legislation is unprecedented in Canada.

When the Declaration Act took effect on November 28, 2019, British Columbia became the first province in Canada, and one of the first jurisdictions in the world, to pass such a law.

The Act mandates B.C., in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, to take all measures necessary to bring provincial laws into alignment with the

*“We believe a shared decision-making process between Indigenous peoples and government must be pursued and has the potential to create greater certainty for business.”*

Val Litwin, President & CEO,  
BC Chamber of Commerce

UN Declaration and to develop an action plan to meet the objectives of the UN Declaration, with annual public reporting to monitor progress and ensure accountability. The Act enables new decision-making agreements between B.C. and Indigenous governing bodies on decisions that directly affect Indigenous peoples – with clear processes, administrative fairness and transparency. The Act acknowledges Indigenous governing bodies as determined and recognized by the citizens of the Nation.

Communications and engagement with stakeholders, partners and local governments were critical to the successful passage of the Act. Sectors that at times can have differing views, such as industry, labour, academia and the legal community, united in support of the legislation.

The Province remains strongly committed to continued engagement and transparency on the work ahead to implement the Act with all sectors of society in B.C., as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

*“We are embarking on not simply a new incremental step up — that has been our path already. We are evolving to the next level. This progress will create a new baseline for the First Nations–Crown partnership.”*

Regional Chief Terry Teegee,  
BC Assembly of First Nations



## Purpose and Scope of Annual Reporting

Section 5 of the Declaration Act requires government to report annually on progress towards alignment of provincial laws with the UN Declaration (s. 3) and development and implementation of an action plan to achieve the objectives of the UN Declaration (s. 4). The annual reports must be developed in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, and are intended to provide transparency and ensure accountability for the work as it progresses.

This first annual report outlines progress made towards implementation for the time period from the date on which the Declaration Act was brought into force (November 28, 2019) until end of fiscal year 2019/20 (March 31, 2020).

As implementation efforts were initiated, a global pandemic began to emerge in February 2020. The context of the pandemic has highlighted how critical it is to persist with the work of reconciliation and indeed presented many opportunities to do so. This ongoing public health emergency has also forced us to think more creatively about how to engage regularly, consistently and effectively with Indigenous peoples throughout the province, particularly in light of measures to maintain physical distancing, prohibit large gatherings and refrain from non-essential travel.

Specific to the development of this annual report, we adapted our approach to engaging with Indigenous peoples through online video platforms and teleconferences. The proposed approach and content for this report were discussed over the months of May and June with the First Nations Leadership Council, Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations, and First Nations directly including through shared tables (treaty, non-treaty, and government-to-government).

Indigenous peoples, wherever they reside, have critically important voices for our work to implement the Declaration Act and we are working towards more effective and inclusive approaches to engagement.

*“The Métis Nation British Columbia Senate applauds the steps taken by British Columbia to introduce UN Declaration legislation as a fundamental step towards acknowledging the human rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the Métis in British Columbia.”*

Bill Bresser, Senate Clerk,  
Métis Nation British Columbia

*The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples represents the minimum standards by which governments can recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples and the rights of Indigenous youth and their families. The implementation of the UNDRIP represents the first important steps by which we, as a province united in the pursuit of reconciliation, will collectively take towards ensuring a safe and welcoming future for Indigenous youth and their families.”*

Matthew Norris, Urban Native Youth Association



## BUILDING FROM A STRONG FOUNDATION

B.C. has made important progress working together with Indigenous peoples to implement the UN Declaration since the Province committed to this work in 2017. The following outlines some key strategic initiatives that have arisen from this work. These accomplishments demonstrate just the beginning of what we can achieve through collaborative leadership and dedicated effort, and provide a strong foundation on which to implement the Declaration Act.

### Supporting Revitalization of Indigenous Languages

B.C. is home to 50% of First Nations languages in Canada and today, fewer than 4,200 people speak one of 34 Indigenous languages in the province. The Province made an historic \$50-million investment in 2018 to support the First Peoples' Cultural Council's work with Indigenous communities to revitalize connections to their languages and culture. The First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) is an Indigenous-led,

*"Learning my language was like seeing the world in colour for the first time."*

Gisele Martin,  
Tla-o-qui-aht Nation

provincial Crown corporation that works in partnership with Indigenous communities to support their cultural revitalization goals.

In 2019/20, FPCC delivered more grant funding than ever before, providing \$15.68 million to communities. FPCC created 3,134

language immersion opportunities across B.C., including funding a record

number of Mentor-Apprentice teams and Language Nests. The council's technical expertise was instrumental in the development of Federal Bill C-91 *An Act respecting Indigenous Languages*.

As a result of the significant investment from the Province, the First Peoples' Cultural Council has quadrupled the number of Mentor-Apprentice teams in the past two years, from 27 to 109 in 2019/20, with 99% of participants in the teams reporting improved language proficiency. The number of Language Nests in the province in that time also has risen from 14 to 33.



## Improving Justice for Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous peoples across Canada are disproportionately and negatively impacted by the justice system, often with devastating consequences for individuals, families, communities, Nations and society at large. In March 2020, the BC First Nations Justice Council and the ministries of Attorney General and Public Safety and Solicitor General signed the [BC First Nations Justice Strategy](#), developed in consultation with First Nations leadership, Elders, community members and service providers. The strategy sets a path to work together to transform the existing criminal justice system, while also restoring First Nations law and justice systems. This includes improving cultural competency within the system, diverting First Nations people from the court system wherever possible, establishing roles for Elders and knowledge-keepers and a systemic approach to implementing the Gladue decision. The strategy also will support First Nations to establish a network of justice centres and increase justice programming in First Nations communities.

## Improving the Approach to Child Welfare

On January 1, 2020, the *Federal Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* was brought into force. Through practice changes and amendments to the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* B.C. is working to improve the lives of Indigenous children and families. Over the past two years, the Province and the Government of Canada have entered into separate tripartite agreements with the Cowichan Tribes, Wet'suwet'en Nation and Secwépemc Nation. In June 2018, the Ministry of Children and Family Development signed a joint commitment with Métis Nation BC to work together towards Métis authority over child welfare for their children and families.

British Columbia has the lowest number of Indigenous children and youth in care since 2000. There is more work to be done – Indigenous children and youth are still overrepresented in the child welfare system, and the Province is committed to working with communities to change that.





## Sharing Long-term Stable Revenues

In November 2018, the B.C. government announced that First Nations in B.C. will share in provincial gaming revenues. This funding is available to all First Nations in B.C. to support self-government and self-determination. Through this new long-term, stable revenue source, First Nations are able to invest in their priorities and much-needed services and infrastructure, such as health and wellness, community safety, transportation and housing, economic and business development and education, language and culture. Nearly \$200 million in provincial gaming revenue was transferred to the limited partnership in August 2019, representing the first two years of funding. In October 2019, amendments to the *Gaming Control Act* were passed to pave the way for a long-term agreement that will see more than \$3 billion shared with First Nations over 25 years.

First Nations are using the revenue for programs that are making a real difference in communities, such as new homes, a community youth centre to support young people, fuel management in a nearby forest to protect homes from wildfires, and language programs that build connection to culture that is integral to the health of communities.

## Working Together to Address Housing Needs

Many Indigenous peoples in B.C. face extraordinary housing challenges. The Building BC: Indigenous Housing Fund was launched in Budget 2018 as part of the Province's 10-year housing plan. It provides \$550 million over 10 years to build 1,750 units of social housing for Indigenous peoples, on- and off-reserve. This makes B.C. the first province in Canada to invest provincial housing funds into on-reserve housing. In addition, we've taken the unprecedented step to open up all of our provincial housing programs to First Nations. The Building BC plan outlines the largest investment in affordable housing in B.C.'s history – more than \$7 billion over 10 years. Under the Indigenous Housing Fund, the Province is working in partnership with Indigenous leaders, Indigenous housing providers and community agencies and First Nations to make sure more Indigenous peoples have access to housing that meets their needs.

In just over two years, nearly 1,200 new affordable housing units for Indigenous peoples are underway in 26 communities across B.C., with almost 400 of those homes on-reserve.

*“By offering a culturally safe, supported and affordable housing option to First Nation, Inuit and Métis youth, we hope to contribute to reconciliation by restoring traditional ways of caring for young people, strengthening their sense of belonging and reminding them of their capabilities, beauty and resilience so that they can move forward as proud, loving and generous members of society, just as their ancestors were.”*

Colleen Lucier, executive director,  
Lii Michif Otipemisiwak Family and Community Services (Kamloops)



## Improving Emergency Preparedness

In mid-March 2020, B.C. adopted a collaborative approach to addressing the identified needs of rural and remote Indigenous communities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic with the creation of an Indigenous Agency Working Group, which included representatives from Emergency Management BC, the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), Indigenous Services Canada and more than 40 cross-government and cross-agency partners.

At the government-to-government level, the Province, Canada and FNHA hold regular dialogue with the FNLC, the First Nations Emergency Services Society (FNESS), First Nations and other provincial-level working groups and partners.

## Improving Educational Outcomes for Indigenous Students

The Province of B.C., the Government of Canada and the First Nations Education Steering committee have a \$100-million, five-year BC Tripartite Education Agreement, which commits the parties to work together to make systemic shifts to support successful educational outcomes of all Indigenous students.

There are 18 First Nations languages with curriculum approval to be taught in B.C. schools, and more in development. The Province has invested \$3.1 million for Indigenous teacher-training curriculum development and 15 new Indigenous teacher education seats at B.C. universities. Teachers in K-12 also now have a new professional standard that requires them to commit to truth, reconciliation and healing. Indigenous content is now woven into all grades and subjects in B.C.'s curriculum to ensure it reflects the rich history, culture, knowledges and perspectives of Indigenous peoples in B.C.

The graduation rate for Indigenous students is much lower than for the general population. Focused attention to address this disparity is leading to improvements. More Indigenous students than ever are graduating from high school, with graduation rates now at more than 69 per cent. Improving the rates until they are equal to the general population continues to be a key goal of the Province.

*"All of the students, including the teachers, are learning more about our ways of knowing, being and doing and I think that instills a sense of pride in our Aboriginal students, and instills respect for our culture in students who aren't Aboriginal, a better way of understanding who we are."*

Charlene Williams, First Nations culture and language teacher, School District 48 Sea to Sky



## Supporting Skills Training Opportunities for Indigenous Learners

In January 2020, the B.C. government provided \$8 million to fund seven organizations to run two-year Indigenous People in Trades Training Programs. Supported by the Industry Training Authority, the programs address community priorities and opportunities with courses ranging from introductory trades to construction and electrical training. Since 2018, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training has supported Indigenous communities to access skills training and post-secondary education through the Indigenous Skills Training Development Fund and the Aboriginal Community-Based Training Partnerships program. These programs support Indigenous communities to respond to their educational and labour market needs, working with skills training and post-secondary education partners. Since 2018, more than 5,000 Indigenous learners have benefitted from these programs.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's call to action No. 50 asked governments to fund Indigenous law institutes. Through a \$2.25-million investment from the Province, the University of Victoria launched Canada's first-ever Indigenous law program in 2018. More than 50 students are now enrolled in the program.

## Recognizing Unique and Distinct Paths to Self-Determination

The Province is taking innovative new approaches to government-to-government relationships with Indigenous Nations through agreement-making. The first of its kind, the tripartite Gwets'en Nilt'i Pathway Agreement, supports negotiations for the practical transition to T̓silhqot'in governance in the declared title area that flows from the Supreme Court of Canada T̓silhqot'in decision, and charts a path of self-determination for the T̓silhqot'in Nation. The Pathway Forward 2.0 Agreement between B.C. and Carrier Sekani First Nations sets out to implement rights, title and self-government through reconciliation measures related to regional economic development, environmental stewardship and business and job opportunities in the forestry sector. The shíshálh Nation Foundation Agreement sets the terms for a government-to-government relationship between the Province and shíshálh around economic development and environmental protection.

For those First Nations that choose to participate in the modern treaty process with the provincial and federal governments, we have shifted to an approach based on recognition and continuation of rights and ensuring that agreements create a 'living relationship' that is capable of evolving and meeting new challenges and opportunities as they arise. This requires exploring more flexible, innovative and collaborative approaches. It also requires supporting incremental, staged or stepping-stone approaches, so critical aspects of agreements can be implemented sooner. Work continues on the implementation of the Douglas Treaties.



## Changing How the Public Service Works with Indigenous Peoples: A Government-to-Government Approach

Government is taking a new approach to building lasting government-to-government relationships with Indigenous peoples, based on respect and recognition of rights. Mechanisms such as advisory councils, committees and working groups, formalized agreements and new standards and principles support this approach. This work includes moving towards shared accountabilities and creating new avenues to centre Indigenous rights in the policy, program and legislative development process and service delivery.

In 2018, B.C. released the [Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples](#) (the Draft Principles) to reinforce the commitment to adopt and implement the UN Declaration and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. The Draft Principles are a guide for all public service employees, uniquely positioned to transform B.C.'s relationships with Indigenous peoples through the important work they do every day.



## REPORTING OUT ON PROGRESS

In fulfillment of Section 5 of the Declaration Act, this section reports out on progress towards alignment of laws (s. 3) and achieving the goals of the action plan (s. 4) during the legislated reporting period November 28, 2019 to March 31, 2020. This section also addresses proposed next steps regarding alignment of laws and the first action plan and subsequent annual reports.

### Development of the Declaration Act

The central accomplishment in the past year is the unprecedented process and historic passage of the Declaration Act which came into force on November 28, 2019. Provincial legislation is typically drafted by internal drafters who base it on instructions from government. However, in this case, the working group, which included Indigenous legal experts, collaboratively developed concepts, approaches and contributed to the instructions of legislation.

Communications and engagement were also critical to the effort. Between June and October of 2019, more than 170 conversations on the legislation took place. This included direct conversations with First Nations prior to the introduction of the legislation, as well as focused engagement with industry, local governments, the legal community, investment houses and social justice organizations.

The bill was introduced in the House with deeply meaningful and culturally reflective ceremony. In a demonstration of the significance of the relationship and the collaborative nature of the legislation, Indigenous leaders addressed members of the legislature from the floor of the House. The bill passed unanimously with applause by Members of the Legislative Assembly on all sides of the House. When granting the bill royal assent, the Lieutenant Governor of B.C. addressed the House directly in the SENĆOŦEN language to commend the unprecedented achievement.

The process and introduction of the legislation represents a fundamental cultural and legal shift within the government, public service and the province. It leaves a lasting impact, creating precedents for legal progress and new ways of working in cooperation and consultation with Indigenous peoples as a means to advance reconciliation.

*“The province of British Columbia is working with us in turning the page of our collective history and embarking down a new era and a path for building a respectful and modern government-to-government relationship, a relationship built on recognition, respect, cooperation and partnership.”*

Cheryl Casimer,  
First Nations Summit



## Early Progress on Implementing the Declaration Act (November 28, 2019 to March 31, 2020)

### *Alignment of Laws*

Initial steps on the alignment of laws with the UN Declaration has involved early discussion with the First Nations Leadership Council to set out the government's legislative priorities and to discuss how to gather input from First Nations on their priority areas for legislative development or amendment. Due to COVID-19, the spring legislative sessions was interrupted, which caused some delays in the initial work.

Broader engagement with Indigenous peoples on this work will be undertaken before it proceeds further. Processes and policy mechanisms are being explored to ensure Indigenous engagement in the various facets of this work – from identifying legislative priorities, to developing tools to assess alignment with the UN Declaration, to new processes for developing and amending legislation in collaboration and cooperation with Indigenous peoples.

### *Action Plan*

An analysis of Indigenous-identified priorities to date is underway, which will provide an important foundation for early engagement on priority actions to include in the action plan. The analysis includes priorities identified by Indigenous peoples through shared tables, consultation findings, policy papers, and correspondence, as well as the [Concrete Actions](#) document.

Early engagement on priorities for the action plan began in February 2020, and included the general assemblies of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, First Nations Summit, BC Assembly of First Nations, the Minister's Advisory Council on Indigenous Women, modern treaty partners (Nisga'a Nation, Tsawwassen First Nation, Tla'amin Nation, Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k:tles7et'h' First Nations, Toquaht Nation, Uchucklesaht Tribe, and Yuułu?ił?atḥ Government) and Tšilhqot'in National Government and other Indigenous partners.

## Continuing Momentum

### *Alignment of Laws*

The work ahead to align provincial laws with the UN Declaration requires B.C. and Indigenous peoples to determine an approach for the review and development of legislation that is collaborative, constructive and efficient. This includes establishing approaches for the identification of priorities, as well as addressing the current unique challenges of Cabinet confidence associated with the legislative process. It will require creativity, innovative thinking and collaboration by Indigenous partners and the public service.



## Action Plan

The action plan, highlighted in the 2020 Speech from the Throne as well as Budget 2020, will be released before the end of the year. It is proposed to be a strategic, provincial-scale, whole-of-government document that prioritizes actions to be taken to implement and achieve the objectives of the UN Declaration. The suggested intent is to identify short-, medium- and long-term actions that reflect priorities identified in collaboration with Indigenous peoples through recent and future engagement, as described in the previous section.

The action plan is not intended to limit ongoing reconciliation work with Indigenous partners underway across government. This important work and other work that is responsive to emergent priorities can and will continue, whether or not it is included or referenced in the action plan.

## Engaging On and Throughout Implementation

The Province is committed to working closely with a diversity of Indigenous peoples to ensure implementation of the Act is truly reflective of Indigenous priorities. Provincial staff are working with the First Nations Leadership Council, the First Nations Health Governance Structure, the Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations, historic treaty Nations, the T̓silhqot̓in National Government, Métis Nation BC, and other Nations directly on development of the action plan and priorities for the alignment of laws.

New and innovative channels are being explored for meaningful and respectful engagement with Métis people, women, Elders, youth, and Indigenous peoples living in urban areas and/or off-reserve on alignment of laws and development of the action plan to ensure their voices are reflected.

*“The Business Council of British Columbia membership is optimistic for the long-term potential of B.C.’s UNDRIP legislation to advance meaningful reconciliation. In the spirit of collaboration, the implementation of the legislation must include engagement with business and their Indigenous partners and communities.”*

Greg D’Avignon, president and CEO,  
Business Council of British Columbia

Measuring our progress on aligning laws and the specific goals and actions identified in the forthcoming action plan is critical. Working with Indigenous peoples to determine not only what we measure but how we measure progress will be central to partnered development of the second annual report.

To ensure successful implementation and to support transparency, we will ensure there are opportunities for engagement with local governments and stakeholders, including industry and labour, as appropriate.



## MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

To achieve lasting reconciliation and embody transformative change, the Province must acknowledge and learn from past wrongs and chart a future together based on trust, mutual respect and recognition and respect for Indigenous human rights. Much progress has been made as

*“The only path forward to prosperity and mutual benefit is one on which we walk together at every level – as individuals, as communities, and as governments.”*

Mayor Josie Osborne, District of Tofino

governments have come together with Indigenous leaders, stakeholders, industry and the public to work on meaningful change to systems, structures and policies to uphold the rights of Indigenous peoples. This work is not always easy, but the commitment to real change is evident from all perspectives.

as we move forward with reconciliation. It has shown the opportunities that partnerships present to improve prosperity and well-being for all citizens by harnessing our diverse strengths as Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples across all sectors of society.

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous peoples has highlighted again the need to respect and partner with First Nations and Indigenous leadership and organizations

Reconciliation is hard work. It does not begin or end with a single decision, event or moment. To make progress on this important work, we must remain committed to pursuing common ground and taking effective action together.

*“My grandfather, a Gitksan High Chief Lelt said to me in the 80s, ‘You watch one day, our Gitksan way of life, our traditional laws and lax yip (territories) will be enshrined in the white man’s laws (non-indigenous laws). It will be a small faint light, then it will begin to glow and then it will glitter in their supreme law.’ With B.C. legislating the UN Declaration, it will signal and provide opportunities for meaningful coexistence, true redress to be recognized as the proper rights holders, partnerships on the lax yip to jointly manage, plan and share the economic fruits.”*

Gitksan Chief Glen Williams





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