



Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k

PRESS RELEASE

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MCK condemns RCMP raid, supports Wet'suwet'en people

For Immediate Release

(Kahnawake – 10, Enniska/February 2020) The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke wishes to express its support for the Wet'suwet'en people and Hereditary Chiefs during this very difficult time and condemns the actions of the RCMP against those protesting peacefully against the Coastal GasLink pipeline.

While Canada, British Columbia and the RCMP use a 'rule of law' argument to allow the controversial pipeline through Wet'suwet'en traditional territory, it has once again been made very clear that there is a fundamental disconnection between the authorities and First Nations people.

"While the province quoted the support of some Indigenous communities – including the Wet'suwet'en elected Council – it has always been understood that consensus must be reached within those communities before any agreements of such magnitude can be considered as binding," said Grand Chief Joseph Tokwiro Norton. "As an elected Council ourselves, we understand the need to maintain a united front when confronting outside governments and forces in times of crisis. Therefore, we remind British Columbia, Canada and the RCMP that it must use restraint, patience and common sense when dealing with the complex issues relating to Indigenous peoples and territories.

"The time is long past when 'authorities' could ignore history – and the realities that exist today – to overrun Indigenous people and ignore our long-standing rights," he continued. "We have grown tired of the never-ending paternalism that so many in government continue to subscribe to."

"I find it quite ironic that B.C. Premier John Horgan was honored and blanketed at the Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly this past December for implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* into B.C. law," Grand Chief Norton concluded. "It appears today that this is just another in a long line of empty gestures designed to appease Indigenous peoples in the short term, while other plans are obviously underway."