



Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

AHOUSAHT
DTIDAHT
ʔIIHATIS / ČIINAŪINT
HESQUIAHT
HUPACASATH

HUU-AY-AHT
KA:YU:K'TH/CHE:K:TLES7ET'H
MOWACHAHT/MUCHALAHT
NUCHATLAHT
TLA-O-QUI-AHT

TOQUAHT
TSESHAHT
UCHUCKLESAHT
YUJL.UJL.ŪATH

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Nuu-chah-Nulth Tribal Council Wants Policing Reform as Soon as Possible

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Port Alberni, BC - The Report of the BC Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act was released yesterday. Their main cure for all the issues with police is to establish a provincial police force for the province, make sure the ills of RCMP policing are addressed and to put in place better policing. Is this the answer, the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council asks? We understand this is a starting point, the proposed Community and Safety Act is to be based on values of decolonization, anti-racism, community, and accountability. Integral to this work, and consistent with DRIPA, is ensuring Indigenous people and Nations are engaged in the drafting of the legislation. This will be critical to the success of the new act.

The Nuu-chah-nulth have been plagued for generations, and particularly in the past few years, with our members being shot and killed by police, as well as deaths in custody, MMIWG, long-awaited arrests on killings/murders, lack of culturally safe procedures, and the lack of trauma-informed practice. We have been calling for no more deaths by police, better training for de-escalation and trauma-informed teams to deal with mental health issues. We continue to work with the RCMP to find better ways of working together, especially in relation to cultural training by our own people and finding ways to instill how valuable our people are to some officers who don't seem to care.

President Judith Sayers said, "I have reviewed the 11 recommendations of the committee and most of them cover what we had proposed to them when we met the committee. But I question the length of time it would take to establish this police force that will address racism, better training and putting in place mental health and addictions as well as other complex social issues with a focus on prevention and community-led responses. We need changes in policing now."

The proposed act promises the direct input into their police structure and governance, including self-administered services. President Sayers comments that, "we have not had great success to date in working collaboratively with the province on the implementation of UNDRIP and aligning laws to it, and wonder how successful this would be. But if we can change things for the better in policing, now is the time to take the chance and to do it."

Vice-President Mariah Charleson added, "The final report issued by the BC Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act and the 11 recommendations made is only words on a paper until we see direct action to end the racism and colonization that persists through police/RCMP services. Our people are literally dying at the hands of our 'justice' system. This needs to end now. It is my hopes that this final report is the starting point to a long overdue transformation of an inherently racist system that has continued to negatively impact First Nations people at disproportionate levels."

Time is of the essence for Nuu-chah-nulth. We do not want to see more shooting deaths by police, higher incarceration rates, and negative relationships and perceptions of the police. We need our Nuu-chah-nulth people protected now by police and most importantly, treated with respect, free of racism and discrimination. If a new body of police can do this, then we can support it. If not, then let us continue working with the RCMP and improving their services. We cannot wait another two years for legislation and then the putting in place of a new policing body.

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About Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

The Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council (NTC) provides programs and services to over 10,000 registered members. The role of the NTC is to represent 14 First Nations in three regions stretching 300 kilometers of the Pacific Coast of Vancouver Island from Brooks Peninsula in the north to Point-no-Point in the south. The NTC represents Ahousaht, Ditidaht, Ehattesaht/Chinehkont, Hesquiaht, Hupacasath, Huu-ay- aht, Kyuquot/Checklesah, Mowachaht /Muchalaht, Nuchatlaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Toquaht, Tseshaht, Uchucklesaht and Ucluelet First Nations and provides a variety of programs and services to them.

For more information, please visit www.nuuchahnulth.org.