



**MEDIA RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 25, 2021

**T̓silhqot̓'in Nation Condemns the use of military-style operations against unarmed Indigenous land defenders.**

**Williams Lake, BC:** The T̓silhqot̓'in Nation is condemning the use of military-style operations (snipers, assault teams, canine units) against unarmed Indigenous land defenders. This comes in response to the RCMP's use of overwhelming military force in Wet'suwet'en territory to arrest peaceful Indigenous land defenders opposing the Coastal GasLink pipeline.

BC, Canada and the RCMP have all voiced commitment to reconciliation, Indigenous sovereignty and the United Nation's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), which is grounded in the principle of free, prior and informed consent. However, these commitments are undermined by the state's actions. The state should not be deploying the RCMP as a military force for private oil and gas companies to suppress and remove peaceful opposition by Indigenous peoples on their own lands.

Achieving reconciliation and implementing UNDRIP cannot, and will not, be achieved while escalating and expanding the use of military force against peaceful protest by Indigenous peoples. The T̓silhqot̓'in Nation calls for an immediate review of the increasing use of military force by the RCMP against Indigenous peoples and a commitment to end these tactics before they become entrenched as the status quo in Canada.

**Quote:**

**Nits'il?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, T̓silhqot̓'in National Government**

"Our historic Aboriginal rights and title case started with a peaceful blockade at Henry's Crossing, with elders, youth, community members and allies standing up to stop large-scale clear-cut logging through the heart of our traditional lands. Indigenous elders, youth and spiritual leaders should not face the risk of snipers, canine units and overwhelming military force, simply for following our teachings and protecting our lands and waters. BC and Canada need to do better. It's a disgrace for Canada and British Columbia to see Indigenous peoples facing military tactics for peacefully standing up for their lands. Did Canada reinstate the War Measures Act against Indigenous peoples? The escalation of these military tactics against Indigenous peoples should be alarming to all Canadians. It has to stop now."

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