

# OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

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## NEWS RELEASE

June 25, 2010

### Union of BC Indian Chiefs Starts Dialogue with B.C. Finance Minister Hansen on HST

(Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver, B.C. – June 25, 2010) On June 3, 2010, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs discussed and passed UBCIC Resolution 2010-21, *Support for Legal Challenge to Implementation of HST*. Yesterday, members of the UBCIC HST Committee and members of the UBCIC and First Nations Summit Executives met with B.C. Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Colin Hansen to discuss the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST).

“We had a frank and candid discussion with Minister Hansen about our serious concerns of the impacts of the HST on First Nations in BC,” said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. “We reminded the Minister that as sovereign Indigenous Peoples we have a right to tax and B.C. infringed this right with their unilateral decision to impose the HST without any consultation.”

During the meeting, Minister Hansen responded and apologized, stating he wished B.C. had engaged First Nations earlier to provide assurances. He further stated that it is his opinion that the HST is “net beneficial” for First Nations.

A central theme of that the discussion was the status-quo of the deep and ongoing poverty experienced by First Nations is absolutely offensive and unacceptable. The Minister stated he heard the message and agreed to further discuss the issues.

Grand Chief Phillip concluded “The UBCIC is encouraged with Minister Hansen’s commitment to an ongoing dialogue to address First Nations’ concerns regarding the HST. We agreed that the next meeting will be hosted by Minister Hansen in Victoria. Furthermore, the UBCIC HST Committee has agreed to present a proposal for further in-depth dialogue about the implementation of the HST. The UBCIC HST Committee continues to consider all options, including a point of sale exemption from the provincial portion of the HST for First Nations in BC.”

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