OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

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UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS
CHIEFS COUNCIL
MARCH 9TH- MARCH 10TH, 2011
VANCOUVER, B.C.

Resolution no. 2011-02

RE: Annual Rent on Forest Tenures

WHEREAS in October 2008 at a meeting held in Prince George, BC, the Minister of Forests and Range (now known as the Ministry of Forests, Mines and Lands) indicated to more than 100 Chiefs and delegates, the First Nations Leadership Council and the First Nations Forestry Council that First Nations tenure holders should not pay the annual rent billed to them;

WHEREAS at the request of the First Nations Forestry Council, the Minister of Forests and Range put in writing via a letter dated April 1, 2009, that affected First Nations communities should not pay their annual rent and further, he would request that the Ministry of Finance put billing on hold;

WHEREAS the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* sets out:

- Article 19: States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.
- Article 26(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired;

WHEREAS the Ministry of Forests has recently indicated that payment for rent, including all rent not paid since October 2008, is due and payable immediately;

WHEREAS considering that First Nations affected by this request are currently faced with outstanding payables that may be in excess of $50,000, it is very unreasonable to make demand for payment; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCIC Chiefs Council direct the UBCIC Executive to work with the First Nations Summit and BC Assembly of First Nations, with the technical support of the First Nations Forestry Council, to immediately undertake discussions with the provincial government to

find a resolution to this issue, which may include: the provincial government forgiving the annual rent charges to date and refunding those communities that have already paid; an ongoing annual rent removal from tenures; and/or a re-payment plan that provides sufficient time.

Moved: **Chief Greg Blaine, Ashcroft Indian Band**
Seconded: **Chief Judy Wilson, Neskonlith Indian Band**
Disposition: **Carried**
Date: **March 10, 2011**