



Friday, June 20, 2008

For immediate release

## News Release

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# Optimism surrounds common table discussions

VANCOVER, BC – After 12 days of intense talks on some of the most complex issues in treaty negotiations, First Nations and the governments of Canada and BC have agreed to continue meeting later this summer.

In four, three-day sessions facilitated by the Treaty Commission, First Nation negotiators and senior officials for the other two governments shared their views on recognition and certainty, including shared territory issues, and the constitutional status of treaty lands. Also on the table for discussion were governance and co-management, including structures for shared decision-making; fiscal relations, including own-source revenue and taxation; and fisheries.

The treaty talks, involving 60 First Nations communities and Canada and BC, ended on a positive note. All parties and the Treaty Commission are optimistic that these discussions have the potential to move the treaty process forward.

A/Chief Commissioner Jody Wilson said, “The discussions at a common table have been an enormous opportunity for the treaty process and for the parties to come together to develop options. The tone in the meetings has been respectful and the parties were well prepared to address the issues.”

The aim of the common table is to bring First Nations together with the other two governments on key issues and to identify obstacles, remove barriers and promote the completion of agreements.

In recognition that progress is being made, the parties agreed Thursday that discussions on next steps will continue in July.

“I am very pleased that all parties have accepted the importance of the common table to deal with some of the most complex and challenging issues facing the resolution of the land question at individual treaty tables across the province,” added Wilson.

“I commend the parties for their hard work and commitment, and strongly encourage them to move forward.”

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### **About the BC Treaty Commission**

The Treaty Commission is the independent body responsible for overseeing treaty negotiations among the governments of Canada, BC and First Nations in BC. It has three roles: facilitation, funding, and public information and education.

Established in 1992, the Treaty Commission and six-stage treaty process are designed to advance treaty negotiations. The Treaty Commission comprises a provincial appointee, a federal appointee, two First Nations Summit appointees and a chief commissioner chosen by agreement of all three parties. For more information about the BC Treaty Commission please visit [www.bctreaty.net](http://www.bctreaty.net).

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