



**For immediate release
Tuesday, March 30, 2004**

INVESTMENT WILL FLOW WITH TREATY SETTLEMENTS

VANCOUVER—Treaties with First Nations will pump billions of dollars into the BC economy according to a report commissioned by the BC Treaty Commission.

The report by Grant Thornton confirms three earlier studies showing treaty settlements to be "a large net positive financial and economic benefit for British Columbia."

"Treaties will bring a major cash injection and new investment to BC," said Acting Chief Commissioner Wilf Adam. "We think the benefits to British Columbians over the longer term will be in the tens of billions of dollars."

The net financial benefit to British Columbia from treaties is nearly \$5 billion, according to the report. Recent land use agreements, court decisions, economic development programs and resource development projects are likely to increase the value of settlements, the report notes.

"Investment will flow when we have treaties," said Adam. "The absence of treaties impacts our economy every day. Our recent survey of businesses confirms the impact has been negative, and continues to be negative."

Sixty-seven per cent of businesses cite unresolved First Nation land claims as important in investment decisions.

One in five companies responding to the Treaty Commission-sponsored survey reported reducing their investment in BC over the past five years because there are no treaties.

More importantly, one in four companies would increase investment if a significant number of treaties were settled. The Treaty Commission survey is based on responses from 143 companies, of which 118 are headquartered in British Columbia. The remaining companies have investment interests in the province.

"This report and our business survey tell us that treaties will provide a major economic opportunity for all British Columbians and will resolve a dispute that has divided the people of this province for too long," said Adam.

[An Update to the Financial and Economic Analysis of Treaty Settlements in British Columbia](#) by Grant Thornton is available at www.bctreaty.net or by calling the Treaty Commission at 604-482-9200 or 800-665-8330. Also available are several viewpoints presented at a recent forum on the [economic case for treaties](#) hosted by the Treaty Commission.

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For more information:

Brian Mitchell

Communications Manager

604 482 9215

brian_mitchell@bctreatycommission.bc.ca