

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

January 9, 2024

Mike Duheme
Commissioner
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Via Email Only: Michael.Duheme@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

Dwayne McDonald
Deputy Commissioner
Commanding Officer of "E" Division
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Via Email Only: dwayne.mcdonald@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

RE: FNLN Call for Meeting to Address RCMP Application to Dispose of Evidence in the Pickton Case and for Victim, Survivor and Family Rights to be Upheld

Dear Commissioner Duheme and Deputy Commissioner McDonald,

The First Nations Leadership Council is deeply concerned to learn of the RCMP's application to dispose of 14,000 exhibits related to the Pickton case. We request an urgent meeting with you to discuss the importance of the Pickton case for BC First Nations and the importance of upholding the rights of survivors and families, who are forever bound to this horrific case. The RCMP has a duty to meaningfully engage on the management of evidence and opportunities for justice with those most impacted. We urge the RCMP to implement a rights-based, trauma-informed, culturally-safe approach to center the rights of victims, survivors and families in this process.

As you are well aware, the majority of Pickton's victims were Indigenous women with deep connections to BC First Nations communities across the province. The atrocities and human rights violations committed, and the impacts of the investigations and legal proceedings related to this case, have been felt widely amongst First Nations and have had a profound lifelong impact on the survivors and families. With Pickton only being convicted of six second-degree murder charges, the vast majority of victims and families of the up 49 women have never received justice. We are deeply concerned that the disposal, or release of evidence from police custody, will negatively impact the chance of any future investigation, charges against potential co-conspirators, and the pursuit of justice as new information or technologies become available. Ultimately, the families must guide how evidence is managed in this case so that their agency and dignity are upheld to the highest degree.

Failure to centre the will of families and survivors in this instance will contribute to a deepening of the systemic discrimination perpetrated against Indigenous peoples since colonization. Crown governments, police and justice authorities have a responsibility to end this discrimination and uphold the rights of victims, survivors and families, and all Indigenous peoples. These responsibilities were affirmed through the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice, including 1.5, 1.6, 9.1, and 9.5, and the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*. Well-researched and widely known priorities and insights into ending systemic gender-based violence and its brutal impacts on our communities continue to be ignored, despite the imperatives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Calls for Justice, the Oppal Inquiry, Highway of Tears Symposium Report, and the Red Woman Rising Report, among many others. These



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF
FIRST NATIONS

1004 Landooz Rd.
Prince George, BC
V2K 5S3

Ph: 778-945-9910
Fx: 778-945-9916



FIRST
NATIONS
SUMMIT

1200-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-926-9903
Fx: 604-926-9923
Toll Free: 866-990-9939



UNION OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA
INDIAN CHIEFS

401 - 312 Main Street
Vancouver, BC
V6A 2T2

Ph: 604-684-0231
Fx: 604-684-5726

reports provide direction on the urgent actions required to uphold the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous women and gender diverse people, including the rights of sex workers. We urge you to consider the RCMP's ongoing actions related to the Pickton case in light of its responsibilities to establish a new relationship with Indigenous peoples based on respect and human rights.

We request an urgent meeting to discuss this matter with you further. Please contact Sarah.Froese@bcfn.ca to arrange this meeting.

Sincerely,

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

On behalf of the FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT



Cheryl Casimer



Robert Phillips



Hugh Braker

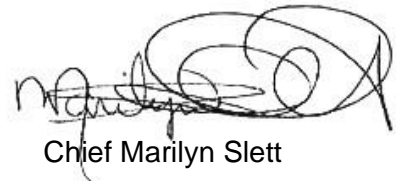
On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip



Chief Don Tom



Chief Marilyn Slett

On behalf of the BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS:



Regional Chief Terry Teegee

Enclosed: FNLN Calls for Preservation of Evidence in the Pickton Case and for Victim, Survivor and Family Rights to be Upheld

A Call To Preserve Evidence In The Pickton Case