

BC Métis Federation Decries Hate Speech and Intolerance of the Métis in BC

NEWS ADVISORY

Vancouver, British Columbia, June 20, 2023 — All media outlets are invited to a news conference hosted today by the BC Métis Federation to discuss UBCIC Resolution no. 2023-39, a resolution that BCMF President Keith Henry says is hate speech.

Details:

- When: 9:30 a.m. PST Tuesday, June 20, 2023
- Where: 390 – 3665 Kingsway Vancouver, BC
- Who: Keith Henry, President of the BCMF / Malcolm Macpherson - Partner with Clark Wilson LLP
- The press conference will be webcast live via Facebook for those who cannot attend in person:

<http://www.facebook.com/BCMetis>

Speakers will be available for interviews following their comments.

BACKGROUND

The UBCIC (Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs) Chiefs Council passed Resolution no. 2023-39 on June 8, 2023, which states that the Métis have failed to be good guests in their territories, are engaged in a colonial pursuit, and hold no constitutionally protected rights in British Columbia. These statements are patently inaccurate and contrary to the historical record, and their effect, whether intended or not, promotes intolerance and hatred towards the Métis in British Columbia.

Keith Henry is the President of the BCMF, one of the Métis groups targeted by the UBCIC Resolution no. 2023-39.

Henry states: “Our communities are shell shocked by UBCIC Resolution no. 2023-39. It is inconceivable to us that in 2023 we would see such an ill-spirited resolution passed which amounts to hate speech. Denying our Section 35 protected rights and our continued existence in British Columbia prior to effective control by the British Crown is dehumanizing. Make no mistake, the intention of Resolution no. 2023-39 is to turn government and public opinion against us and erase us from the collective memory of the building of modern-day British Columbia through the fur trade and other economic pursuits.”

Henry further states: “Equally shocking is how extreme Resolution no. 2023-39 is. It is calling, in a public way, for our demise. You’d think that in 2023, we wouldn’t be subjected to this kind of vitriol and what amounts to a type of Indigenous cannibalism. The UBCIC Chiefs Council appears to view resource sharing and Indigenous rights recognition as a zero sum game, when clearly it is not. Everybody knows Canada is a tapestry of co-existing rights which are reconciled against each other for the collective betterment. I’d

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like to think that the UBCIC Chiefs Council does not reflect the majority view of First Nations in British Columbia as their position is so extreme and damaging.”

Malcolm Macpherson is a partner with Clark Wilson LLP who represents the BCMF.

Macpherson states: “Resolution no. 2023-39 is troubling as it promotes intolerance and has the effect of negatively targeting the BCMF’s dignity and very identity. To say to an Indigenous person or community in a public forum what amounts to ‘you are a fraud and don’t have constitutionally protected rights’ is to put into question their very existence. This is contrary to what the UBCIC says it does on its website, where it states it ‘upholds the principles and standards articulated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) for the establishment and maintenance of a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, well-being and rights of Indigenous Peoples.’ ”

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