



MEDIA RELEASE

The Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations welcomes treaty loan forgiveness and reimbursement and enhanced fiscal funding announced in Federal Budget 2019.

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TSAWWASSEN LANDS, BC — The seven indigenous governments behind the Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations (ABCMTN) – Tsawwassen First Nation, Tla’amin Nation, and the five Maa-nulth Nations (Huu-ay-aht, Ka:yu:k't'h'/Chek'tles7et'h', Toquaht, Uchucklesaht, and Yuulu?il?ath) – welcome the federal government’s announcement that it will forgive all outstanding modern treaty negotiation loans and reimburse those indigenous governments that are repaying or have already repaid their loans. Each of the member Nations of the ABCMTN strongly advocated for loan reimbursement as a matter of fairness.

“We welcome yesterday’s announcement, which comes after many years of engagement with the federal government on this issue,” says Chief Bryce Williams of Tsawwassen First Nation. “It has long been our position that negotiation debts are an unjust financial burden, at odds with the spirit and intent of our modern treaties. The Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement does not just benefit Tsawwassen First Nation. It is a benefit to all Canadians. As such, it never made sense for us to shoulder a debt burden for working to advance a truly equal relationship.”

Each of the member Nations of the ABCMTN have also advocated for adequate fiscal capacity to meet our expenditure needs to provide effective self-government and implement our treaties. As an important first step in this regard, we also applaud the Budget 2019 commitment to invest in the governance, infrastructure and lands and resources management funding approaches that were developed through the collaborative self-government fiscal policy, as well as the commitment to further collaborate on proposals for new and enhanced tax powers and tax arrangements.

These components of the Budget 2019 announcement will have a significant and much needed positive financial impact for each of the ABCMTN communities. As an example, the Tla’amin Nation’s treaty loan exceeded \$11 million, money that will be able to be reinvested back into the community according to the Tla’amin Nation’s priorities. Further, the collaboratively developed approach to funding governance will provide the Tla’amin Nation a nearly 300% increase of annual funding to a crucial area of self-government.

About the Alliance of BC Modern Treaty Nations

The Alliance was formed by Tsawwassen First Nation, Tla’amin Nation, and the five Maa-nulth Nations (Huu-ay-aht, Ka:yu:k't'h'/Chek'tles7et'h', Toquaht, Uchucklesaht, and Yuulu?il?ath) in July 2018 to collaborate on areas of mutual interest related to treaty implementation in British Columbia. While a Canada-wide coalition of modern treaty indigenous governments and organizations (the Land Claims Agreement Coalition) already existed to advocate for improved treaty implementation at the federal level, modern treaty nations in BC needed an avenue to collectively engage at the provincial level.

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