Mennonite Church Canada

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Wet'suwet'en & Crown Conflict: Resources for Understanding

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Over the last weeks, the eyes of Canadians have turned to Wet'suwet'en territory in north-central British Columbia as the Crown, RCMP and Coastal Gaslink have sought to remove Indigenous land defenders from their homelands in order to continue work on a natural gas pipeline. Many in the church have questions about how to understand the situation. The following is a list of resources—news articles, videos, church statements, technical reports, books and more—that can help us learn, facilitate further and perhaps different questions, encourage prayer… and maybe even acts of solidarity. It is by no means exhaustive, and the content varies in substance and the ways in which it narrates the various relationships. Nonetheless, we hope it will serve to open compassionate conversation and deeper comprehension.

In friendship,

Steve Heinrichs
Indigenous-Settler Relations Director
Mennonite Church Canada

Understanding the Situation

- Past & Present Developments on the Land
    - 2 Minute Video--Who are the Wet'suwet'en and why are Indigenous Peoples blocking railroad tracks--Unist'oten Camp
    - How did we get here? Timeline from the Unist'ot'en Camp
    - News releases, videos & important information from Unist'ot'en Camp, the Indigenous re-occupation of Wet'suwet'en land
    - Video--Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs Reject Pipelines
    - Backgrounder Audio interview with Dr. Karla Tait, Unist'ot'en house member--Legalease
    - February 23rd Update Audio interview with Dr. Karla Tait--CBC
    - Video--Invasion (On the Unist'ot'en Camp, Gidimt'en Checkpoint, and Wet'suwet'en Nation)
    - Video Interview with Molly Wickham, Governance Director for the Office of the Wet'suwet'en--Democracy Now
    - Interview with Hereditary Chiefs--The Wet'suweten and the Space Between--Culturally Modified
    - Conflict with Wet'suwet'en years in the making--CBC
    - BC's UN Declaration Act (Bill 41) and how that impacts this situation--Tyee
    - Arrests of land defenders on Wet'suwet'en territory--Narwhal
    - Audio Interview with Grand Chief Stewart Phillip (UBCIC)--Reconciliation cannot be achieved at gunpoint--CBC
    - Divergent voices in Wet'suwet'en and across Canada--APTN
    - Who do you support when a community is divided?--Canadian Mennonite
    - "It's none of their business": The Wet'suwet'en people who want the protestors to stop--CBC

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- Former Treaty Negotiator accuses B.C. government of 'picking their Indians' in Wet'suwet'en conflict--CBC
- Understanding First Nations Jurisdiction and Different Views--Michael Toledano (Twitter Thread)
- We who have been colonized should support Indigenous protests--Ottawa Citizen
- Protestors or land defenders of unceded territory?--Straight
- On the RCMP and their relationship with corporations--Briarpatch
- Video--Panel press conference with AFN leaders--CPAC
- Video--Your questions about Wet'suwet'en--Pam Palmater

- Aboriginal Title, Land Rights, and the Rule of Law
  - Audio interview with Bruce McIvor--Legal Precedents for Wet'suwet'en Resistance--Policy Options
  - First Peoples Law Explainer--Canadian Dimension
  - Settler governments are breaking international law, not Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs, say 200 legal scholars & lawyers--The Star
  - Law Professor Kent McNeil on pipeline protests & the rule of law--Vancouver Sun
  - Whose rule of law?--Tyee
  - Whose land? Whose law?--Times Colonist
  - On the Delgamuukw Case (SCC 1997) and its implications--CBC
  - Where's the commitment to free, prior, and informed consent?--East Kootenay News
  - Indigenous Foundations--Aboriginal Land Rights and Title
  - Resources on the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including Free, Prior and Informed Consent--Declaration Coalition

- Coastal Gaslink Pipeline
  - Backgrounder from KAIROS Canada
  - An Analysis of Coastal GasLink's Notice of Application for Injunction--Yellowhead Institute

- Hereditary System & Indian Act Band Council System
  - Beyond bloodlines--Globe & Mail
  - The Wet'suwet'en are more united than pipeline backers want you to think--Macleans

- Indigenous Land Reclamation
  - Land Back--A Yellowhead Institute 'Red Paper'

- Climate Change
  - Wet'suwet'en chiefs launch climate lawsuit--Globe & Mail
  - House chiefs launch legal challenge over impacts of fossil fuel projects--Raven Trust
  - 6 awkward realities behind B.C.'s Liquefied Natural Gas giveaway--Narwhal

- Where to from here?
  - A 5 Step Plan for Reconciliation--First Peoples Law

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Statements of Solidarity

- Church Statements
  - Anglican Church
    - National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop Mark Macdonald--Why I stand with the five hereditary leaders of Wet'suwet'en, especially now--Anglican Journal
  - United Church--Moderator & National Indigenous Elders Council
  - Ecumenical Leaders
  - Jesuits of Canada
  - KAIROS Canada
  - Presbyterian Church in Canada

- Indigenous/Human Rights/Social Justice Group Statements
  - Academics & Lawyers Open Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau and Premier Horgan
  - Assembly of First Nations
  - Canadian Union of Public Employees
  - The Council of Canadians
  - Idle No More
  - Union of BC Indian Chiefs
  - University of Northern British Columbia
  - *Further List of Support Statements on the Unist'ot'en Camp Website*

Prayers

- United Church
- Mennonite Church Canada
- Christian Peacemaker Teams

How to Support Wet'suwet'en

- Wet'suwet'en Supporter Toolkit--Unist'ot'en Camp
- Amnesty--3 Ways to Support
- Christian Peacemaker Teams--Faith Action Toolkit
- Council of Canadians--Write your Member of Parliament

Books Specifically for Churches on the Doctrine of Discovery & the UN Declaration

- Yours, Mine, Ours--Unravelling the Doctrine of Discovery
- Wrongs to Rights--How Churches Can Engage the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

General Resources on Indigenous Settler Relations

- Please see www.commonword.ca/go/1479