



January 11, 2019

We as Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans are writing to express our concern and distress about disturbing events in Wet'suwet'en land this past week. Specifically, we are concerned about the arrests at the Gitdim'ten checkpoint on Monday, January 7th, 2019. Our concern is threefold: 1) This action willfully ignores the right of the Wet'suwet'en People to free, prior, and informed consent as is their inherent right and as delineated throughout the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2) This action willfully ignores the authority of the traditional hereditary leadership of the Wet'suwet'en People, and 3) The use of this type of unnecessary and violent force to dismantle the checkpoint and arrest and incarcerate land defenders demonstrates a dedicated disregard for the fundamental principles of Indigenous Rights.

We thoughtfully and prayerfully support the traditional leaders and implore the forces of government and industry to join us in upholding the basic rights of Indigenous peoples, particularly in this situation, as expressed in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. To this end, we add government and industry leaders and workers to our prayers, praying not only for a change of heart and tactics but also for the well-being and safety of all involved and threatened by this disruption of the well-being of the Land. To all who seek a good outcome in this matter, we commend the Seven Traditional Teachings: humility, respect, trust, honesty, wisdom, courage, and love, as well as our call to keep in mind and heart the Seventh Generation not yet born.

We issue this statement of concern and call for prayer in the spirit of our church's commitment to uphold the UN Declaration, to the continuing work of reconciliation as expressed in the ninety-four calls to action of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and to the shared hope of laying a foundation for a better future for all people in Canada. We are aware that the situation continues to evolve and we continue to pray for healing and reconciliation among those involved.

The Most Rev. Fred Hiltz
Primate, Anglican Church of Canada

The Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald
National Anglican Indigenous Bishop,
Anglican Church of Canada

The Rt. Rev. Barbara Andrews
Bishop of the Territory of the People,
Anglican Church of Canada

The Rt. Rev. David Lehmann
Bishop of Caledonia,
Anglican Church of Canada

The Most Rev. Melissa Skelton
Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical
Province of BC and Yukon,
Anglican Church of Canada