LYACKSON
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Lyackson First Nation Denounces Premier Eby's False Crisis Narrative and Blame of First Nations Leadership on UNDRIP

(**Thursday April 16th, 2026, Halalt Territory, BC)** - Lyackson First Nation is denouncing Premier David Eby's public framing of British Columbia's approach to the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) as offering only two options — amendment or suspension — and his recent decision to publicly blame the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) for "failing to compromise".

"This is a false and harmful framing," said Huy wu qw, Laxele'wuts'aat, Shana Thomas Hereditary Chief of Lyackson First Nation, elected member of the First Nations Summit Political Executive, and member of the FNLC. "It ignores the fact that First Nations, including Lyackson, have already brought forward workable, good-faith solutions — and instead shifts the narrative into blame, rather than responsibility."

On March 27, 2026, Lyackson First Nation formally provided the Province with three constructive options to address concerns arising from the Gitxaala decision while strengthening certainty, transparency, and reconciliation. To date, none of those proposals have received a response from the Province.

"These were not oppositional proposals," Chief Thomas said. "They were solutions designed to reduce conflict, reduce litigation, and support a mature, accountable UNDRIP alignment process. Silence in the face of those options, followed by public blame, is not leadership."
Lyackson First Nation is particularly concerned by the Province's ongoing pattern of communicating through the media first, before engaging with or even informing First Nations leadership.

"Premier Eby has chosen to speak to the public and the press before responding to our good faith attempts to work together toward a solution," said Chief Thomas. "That undermines government-to-government relations and erodes trust."

Chief Thomas emphasized that placing responsibility on the First Nations Leadership Council — while failing to engage with Nation-specific proposals — misrepresents the reality of First Nations governance and deflects from the Province's own obligations under DRIPA.

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“First Nations leadership has consistently shown a willingness to engage, problem-solve, and co-develop,” she said. “What we have asked for is dialogue, not ultimatums; partnership, not public pressure.”

The three proposals put forward by Lyackson First Nation include:

1. An independent, co-governed UNDRIP Consistency Review Office to provide expert, early review of legislation and policy; similar to a tribunal.
2. Mandatory UNDRIP consistency statements for all bills and regulations, similar to Charter compliance assessments; and
3. A limited stated-case or reference process to allow advisory judicial guidance as a last resort, avoiding protracted litigation.

“These options protect certainty while respecting First Nations rights,” Chief Thomas said. “Framing the issue as ‘amend or suspend’ erases these solutions and creates a false crisis.”
Lyackson First Nation warned that attempting to limit oversight and oversight pathways does not diminish UNDRIP’s legal relevance.

“UNDRIP exists in international law, Canadian law, and through Section 35 of the Constitution,” said Chief Thomas. “You cannot wish it away. What you can do is work with First Nations to implement it responsibly.”

Lyackson First Nation is calling on Premier Eby and the Province of British Columbia to:

- Stop publicly blaming First Nations and our political organizations,
- End the practice of media-first decision-making, and
- Meaningfully engage with the options already put forward by First Nations.

“Reconciliation is not about controlling the narrative,” Chief Thomas concluded. “It is about listening, sharing responsibility, and finding solutions together. British Columbia still has the opportunity to do that — but it must choose engagement over deflection.”

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