

From: [Plank, Sarah GCPE:EX](#)
To: [Caul, Doug D IRR:EX](#); [Wood, Jessica IRR:EX](#); [Melles, Jennifer IRR:EX](#); [Balcaen, Trish L IRR:EX](#); [Christensen, Suzanne IRR:EX](#)
Cc: [Venn, Tania GCPE:EX](#)
Subject: FW: FYI-- BC Human Rights Tribunal Report
Date: January 14, 2020 5:03:40 PM
Attachments: [Media Release - BCHRT report .pdf](#)
[Backgrounder BCHRT report .pdf](#)
[BCHRT Press Conference Media Advisory.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Sharing as an FYI, flagged by MAG...

The BC Human Rights Tribunal, who are fully independent, are holding a press conference tomorrow about a report that was commissioned. Attached are the NR and Backgrounder they plan on distributing to media.

A couple of things to note:

- Kasari Govender is quoted in this news release and will likely be at the event tomorrow at 10am.
- Doug White from BC First Nations Justice Council mentions BMO issue.
- There are two recommendations that urge the government to act:
 - Expand legislation to add Indigenous identity as a ground of discrimination to the BC Human Rights Code.
 - Increase funding for Indigenous legal representation

Media requests will likely be deferred back to the BCHRT unless they are specific to the two recommendations.

Sarah Plank

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British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal

Expanding our Vision: Cultural Equality and Indigenous Peoples Human Rights report

History of Report

The British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal is responsible for receiving and reviewing complaints under the *BC Human Rights Code*. Indigenous Peoples do not file as many human rights complaints as others. Diana Juricevic, Chair of the Human Rights Tribunal wanted to understand why. Ardith Walpetko We'dalx Walkem, QC, was commissioned to write a report on the current situation and make recommendations. In preparing her report, Ms. Walkem surveyed over 100 Indigenous People about their experiences with discrimination and the Human Rights Tribunal.

Context of report

The Province of BC is moving forward in the spirit of change and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, is a human rights framework which the BC government will implement through the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, and the MMIWG2S Inquiry's Calls for Justice.

These widespread calls for change in the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and Canadian society are inspired by Indigenous Peoples who are speaking up and are being heard. The Walkem report is informed by this larger context and contributes to the access to justice 'journey of renewal' currently being undertaken by the BC Human Rights Tribunal. This report identifies a bold path forward that is accessible and achievable.

The provincial government's legislation to implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* has made embarking on this journey an immediate obligation.

Key quotes from Ardith Walpetko We'dalx Walkem QC in the report

"Incorporation of Indigenous legal definitions of human rights, and mechanisms for ensuring fairness and freedom from discrimination, is a cornerstone of access to justice".

"Human rights, at their core, are about inclusion and honouring the dignity and uniqueness of others, and for Indigenous Peoples, this protection includes the collective expression of those human rights".

Survey Results

Indigenous Peoples overwhelmingly identified that they have experienced instances of discrimination which they feel violated their human rights. They reported numerous and repeated incidents of what they believed to be discrimination. Yet, in the vast majority of cases, they did not file complaints through the Human Rights Tribunal. Some had no idea that the Human Rights Tribunal existed, or how to access it. Many said that their experiences of racism as Indigenous Peoples were so pervasive that they did not believe it would make any difference to file a complaint with the Human Rights Tribunal.

The Human Rights Tribunal is seen as primarily an urban entity which is disconnected from, and unreachable by, Indigenous Peoples in different regions, particularly smaller and more remote communities. Many highlighted the need to create public awareness about specific forms and expressions of discrimination that Indigenous Peoples face, but which are often unacknowledged.

Summary of Recommendations

The report makes nine recommendations. The Human Rights Tribunal will act immediately on five recommendations:

1. **Recruitment:** Increase the number of Indigenous Peoples at the Human Rights Tribunal.
2. **Remove Barriers:** Identify and remove procedural barriers within the Human Rights Tribunal.
3. **Affirmative Access:** Implement active efforts to address underrepresentation of Indigenous complainants accessing the Human Rights Tribunal. Create an affirmative access program for Indigenous Peoples.
4. **Action Plan:** Create a Human Rights Tribunal committee to implement the recommendations in *Expanding Our Vision*. Indigenous lawyers and cultural leaders or academics with knowledge of human rights should be recruited to join these efforts.
5. **Report on Progress:** Human Rights Tribunal will report on immediate steps within the first six months and then on a yearly basis.

The Human Rights Tribunal will collaborate for transformative change on four recommendations:

6. **Expand Legislation:** Add Indigenous Identity as a ground of discrimination under the BC Human Rights Code. This would send a message of inclusion and reflect the individual and collective nature of Indigenous human rights.
7. **Broaden the concept of human rights** to incorporate Indigenous Legal Traditions and international human rights principles as reflected in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
8. **Education and Training:** Create education materials and training for Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights Tribunal, and general public. Education about human rights are necessary to begin the process of transforming relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Canadian Society.
9. **Legal Representation:** Increase funding for Indigenous legal representation. Improve the training for and number of lawyers available to support Indigenous Peoples in bringing human rights complaints, with an emphasis on Indigenous lawyers.

Moving Forward with this Call to Action – Response from Human Rights Tribunal Chair, Diana Juricevic

Expanding our Vision is a challenge to those of us who have some power to change the institutions that have for so long discriminated against Indigenous Peoples.

The Human Rights Tribunal welcomes the recommendations in *Expanding our Vision*. We want to offer a process that is safe and accessible for Indigenous Peoples, and will work directly with Indigenous communities to achieve that result. We aim to transform the human rights process into one that is inclusive and makes a real difference in the lives of Indigenous Peoples.

I invite everyone to join us on this journey, together with Indigenous Peoples and communities, to transform the way we provide justice.

Contact:

Diana Juricevic, Chair, British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal

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Toll Free: 888-440-8844

TTY: 604-775-2021

Ardith Walkem, QC, Author of *Expanding our Vision*

Tel: 604-858-7788

MEDIA ADVISORY OF PRESS CONFERENCE: Release of Ground-breaking Report on Indigenous Experiences of the BC Human Rights Tribunal

WHAT: BC Human Rights Tribunal (BCHRT) will release a report authored by Ardith Walpetko We'dalx Walkem QC, titled *Expanding Our Vision – Cultural Equality and Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights*. The report provides a snapshot of Indigenous Peoples' understanding of the BC human rights framework and highlights the need for the BCHRT to engage Indigenous communities on a collective basis to develop a shared plan for moving forward. The report is based on surveys of over 100 Indigenous People about their use of the human rights tribunal and makes recommendations for considerable changes and amendments.

WHEN: Wednesday January 15, 2020
10:00 a.m. P.S.T.

WHERE: Union of BC Indian Chiefs boardroom
4th floor- 312 Main Street (entrance on Cordova)

Speakers include:

- Ardith Walpetko We'dalx Walkem QC, author of report
- Diana Juricevic, Chair, British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal
- Amber Prince, Staff Lawyer, Atira Women's Resource Society
- Kasari Govender, Human Rights Commissioner of BC
- Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President, Union of BC Indian Chiefs

Media contact:

Ellena Neel, UBCIC, eneel@ubcic.bc.ca [778-866-0548]



British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal

British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal releases “transformational” report on Indigenous human rights and access to justice

Key partners commit to an action plan to transform human rights for Indigenous Peoples

Today, the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal (BCHRT) released a report addressing serious access to justice concerns for Indigenous peoples bringing human rights complaints to the tribunal. The report, entitled *Expanding our Vision: Cultural Equality and Indigenous Peoples Human Rights*, makes far-reaching recommendations that, according to Human Rights Tribunal Chair, Diana Juricevic, could transform human rights in this province.

The BCHRT is being joined by Indigenous, legal and human rights organizations in a shared commitment to transform human rights for Indigenous Peoples in the province.

Report author Ardith Walpetko We’dalx Walkem QC surveyed over 100 Indigenous People about their experiences with discrimination and the Human Rights Tribunal. Overwhelmingly those interviewed reported pervasive levels of discrimination. Many Indigenous People had no idea that the Human Rights Tribunal existed, or how to access it. Many said that their experiences of racism as Indigenous Peoples were so widespread that they did not believe it would make any difference to file a complaint with the Human Rights Tribunal.

Expanding our Vision makes nine recommendations. Removing barriers to access to the Human Rights Tribunal is not enough. Structural change is needed to incorporate Indigenous definitions of human rights according to Indigenous laws. The main recommendations broaden the concept of human rights, including adding Indigenous Identity to the BC *Human Rights Code* and incorporating Indigenous legal traditions and international human rights principles as reflected in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which BC has recently committed to implementing through legislation.

“This report is a call to action,” says Chair Juricevic. “The Tribunal will actively engage with Indigenous Peoples and communities to move forward in a meaningful way on these recommendations. The report has implications beyond the Tribunal’s work, and we are committed to working collaboratively with others.”

For media inquiries, contact:

Diana Juricevic, Chair, BC Human Rights Tribunal

Tel: 604-775-2000

Toll Free: 888-440-8844

Ardith Walkem, QC, Author of *Expanding our Vision*

Tel: 604.858.7788

Backgrounder Attached

Quotes:

Ardith Walkem QC, Author of *Expanding our Vision*, from the report:

Copyright

The Honourable Chief Justice Robert Bauman, Chair of Access to Justice BC

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Douglas White, Chairperson, BC First Nations Justice Council

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Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs

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Amber Prince, Atira Women's Resource Society / member of Sucker Creek Cree Nation

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Kasari Govender, Commissioner, Office of the Human Rights Commissioner for British Columbia

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Josh Paterson, Executive Director, Law Foundation of British Columbia

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Laura Track, Human Rights Lawyer and Director of Education, Community Legal Assistance Society

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Ponchet, Kim IRR:EX

From: Farrah, Jean-Simon <JeanSimon.Farrah@bmo.com>
Sent: January 16, 2020 10:08 AM
To: Minister, IRR IRR:EX
Subject: 49125 - FW: BMO Press Release

Categories: Dealt with by CU, FYI/FILE

Good morning,

My name is Jean-Simon Farrah and I'm with Bank of Montreal. BMO just issued the press release below in response to an incident at our Vancouver Branch. I'm sharing as it may be of interest to Minister Fraser. Do let me know if you have any questions.

Cheers,
Jean-Simon

<https://newsroom.bmo.com/2020-01-16-BMO-Announces-Indigenous-Advisory-Council-with-Indigenous-Leaders-from-Across-Canada>

BMO Announces Indigenous Advisory Council with Indigenous Leaders from Across Canada

Acceleration of Council demonstration of BMO's Purpose in wake of BC Apology

TORONTO, Jan. 16, 2020 /CNW/

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