



Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations  
Annual General Meeting  
May 27 & 28, 2004  
Woyenne Reserve, Lake Babine Nation

**DAY 1 – Thursday, May 27, 2004**

Meeting commenced at 9:45 am. Opening Prayer by elder Dennis Alec  
Chair: Justa Monk, Co-chair: Chief Emma Palmantier

*Welcome, Opening Remarks & General Business:*

- Chief Emma Palmantier welcomed delegates. Expressed her thanks to the Haida Nation, Tsimshian, Nisga'a, Haisla and Lake Babine Nation members for attending. Lake Babine Nation is host to the North West Tribal Treaty Nations Annual General Meeting and open to all Nations of Northern BC.
- *Amendments to the Agenda:* Phil Fontaine rescheduled to the afternoon of day 2. An aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management presenter were unable to attend and that item removed from the agenda. Forestry and the First Nations Summit elections originally scheduled for day 3 are rescheduled to day 1.

**Motion 2004-01** That the agenda be accepted as amended.

Moved by Richard Russ

Seconded by Archie Alec

CARRIED

*NWTT Finances (as presented by Mel Bevan)*

- Review of the Northwest Tribal Treaty Society Audited Financial Statements (by McAlpine & Company) in draft form as at March 31, 2004.

**Motion 2004-02** That the draft audited financial statements as at March 31, 2004 be accepted as presented.

Moved by Harold Leighton

Seconded by Archie Alec

CARRIED

*NWTT Structure*

Discussion on the North West Tribal Treaty Charter (draft 12) Article I to XI as presented by Mel Bevan.

We, the signatories are of one heart in the advancement and protection of our common interests identified in the following principles:

1. **We** shall continue to practice our own tribal political systems and laws, and we intend these separate jurisdictions to continue;
  2. **We** shall continue to express our sovereignty as Nations;
  3. **We** shall assist each other to reaffirm our continuing Hereditary Title and expression to our rights; and defend these against any erosion through external forces;
  4. **We** shall collectively join other First Nations' efforts to pursue the full exercise and aboriginal rights and title;
- Article II – Declaration of Rights: We the original peoples of Northern British Columbia hereby declare these to be Our Rights.

Recording Secretary Barbara Michell of the Lake Babine Nation



Albert Peeling presented an executive summary of the NWTT's governance project, which contains the following parts:

- *Introduction: Identifying the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations.* This part introduces the NWTT and sets out the purpose of the paper: to review current and traditional models of governance and law making processes of First Nations, and the blending of the traditional with modern democratic practices with an eye to developing Best Practices in the territories occupied by the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations.
- *Background: Setting out the history of the First Nations Governance Act and the responses to it.* This part reviews the proposed First Nations Governance Act, and the responses to it.
- *Considerations: Law Making in an Aboriginal Setting.* Any system of governance for Aboriginal people must take into account the legal culture and traditional governance of the Aboriginal peoples themselves, and then reconcile that with the Canadian political structures.
- *Survey of Traditional Governance in the Northwest including examples from Kitselas traditions set out in "The Men of Medek," and the "Potlatch System" of the Carrier and the Gitksan.* The materials available concerning traditional governance demonstrate that the people of the Northwest had a clear idea of law rooted in custom, and of responsible government under law.
- *Survey of Contemporary Models of Law Making from the Gitanyow, the Nisga'a and the Westbank First Nation.* Some of the features of these contemporary models of governance are here set out.
- *An examination of the Proposed First Nations Governance Act.* While expanded legislative powers could have provided Band Councils with the ability to establish a longer-term framework and administrative structure to Aboriginal governance, binding in law, the proposed Act was marred by a lack of separation of legislative and administrative functions. Much of the focus of First Nation government would remain enmeshed in administrative decisions rather than policy questions. The problem of financial accountability was not sufficiently addressed in so far as financial accountability is often a matter of contract between First Nations and federal or provincial governments, which provide funding for specific programs. Federal and provincial spending power tends to reduce democratic financial accountability to the community.
- *Study of the Federal Parliamentary System of Governance.* The job of parliament includes the powers of Supply, Representation; and Legislation, and it is important to note that the most important of these is supply, that is the provision of government with the money it requires to govern
- *Study of the present Indian Act System - to understand some of the problems of the Indian Act System one must see it in the context of Federal Parliamentary Governance as a whole.* While politically Band Councils are responsible to their Bands, financial power lies with the Department of Indian Affairs, and other departments of government with whom First Nations deal. Any change in the present system must ensure that financial and political accountability flow primarily in the same direction. First Nations governments must become financially independent of the Department of Indian Affairs: and approval of expenditures should be done by the community itself. The importance of Aboriginal title, which promises an independent source of revenue for Aboriginal governments, cannot be underestimated.

The second part of the paper focuses on more general considerations of what makes good governance. It deals with these topics:

- *Legitimacy and the Rule of Law* - There are two basic sources of legitimacy for any government 1) Traditions and 2) the good of the people.

- *The Separation of Powers* – The separation of powers is concerned with finding a form of government, which prevents the powers of legislation, execution and judging being held by the same person or persons. This separation is supposed to prevent many arbitrary and oppressive actions in government
- *Subsidiary* – This is a principle of governance adopted in the European Union, which asserts that it is wrong for a larger organization to assume functions, which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies.
- *Best Practices* – These may be defined as “good practices that have worked well elsewhere and is proven to produce successful results.” No model of modern Aboriginal governance has been around long enough to meet the Best Practices Standard, either because the time elapsed since the establishment of the model has not been sufficient for it to have been proven, or because the model has not been implemented at all.
- *Some Principles* — As opposed to practices, the paper proposes principles, which should be adhered to. These principles are reviewed in the Harvard Project, the Institute on Governance, and in Lon Fuller’s work.
- *A Model of Governance* – The paper proposes a model of governance, which could be used to guide First Nations, as they attempt to accommodate modern ideas of responsible and accountable governance within a traditional framework. The model allows for community participation in government but also allows for leadership.

*Recommendations:*

- 1) Develop model legislation concerning a Law Making Process and a Public Service Act,
- 2) a Governance Conference in Terrace concerning First Nations and Provincial Relations,
- 3) develop links with Governance Institutes and Federal Processes,
- 4) develop a model of Law Governing Law Making Procedures and
- 5) research the traditional laws of the NWTT Nations.

*Question & discussion:*

- A representative of Nisga’a Lisims government invited people to visit the Nass Valley to observe what has become of Nisga’a territory.

*Forestry: NWTT Forestry Committee Update*

*Report by Chief Leonard Thomas, Forestry Committee Chair and Paul Blom, RPF (CSTC)*

- The province (to date) has signed agreements with 36 First Nations providing \$47.9 million in revenue sharing under terms they call First Nations licenses.
- The Softwood lumber Dispute between Canada and America is ongoing and directly impacting forest companies across Canada.
- The province of BC is discussing openly a return to a quota-basis.
- We have been trying to make some moves on combination of components on licenses and pesticide use.
- Requires getting everybody on board in regards to pesticide.
- Four bands in Yekooche, Nak’azdli, Tlazten, Takla in regards to timber cut in their area.
- Licensee for Canfor can negotiate with government
- Issues that has been covered with NWTT meetings.
- Soft wood lumber dispute – important to economy
- Quota sales will probably get next to nothing

*Question and discussion:*

- Why is it that Lake Babine does not receive revenue shares with Forestry? The majority of people hired at Babine Forest Products are non-native. Would like to see First Nations' people working at Babine Forest Products.
- As aboriginal people, we do not want to lose our tax-exempt status. How will treaty negotiations affect our current tax exemptions?
- Logging Industry in regards to stumpage price is high and lumber price is low, couldn't we get some lumber to use within our community?
- Stumpage is a big issue; cut control was taken away, market-based stumpage system.
- Leonard Thomas recommends that April 26-27, 2004 accept that decision on how are we going to use it.
- Bring it to a committee, what do we do with position
- Should have a planning session that court case to our benefit
- Agree to Wet'suwet'en and discuss the issues in the court case what we would use it when we win.

### **Resolution 2004-02**

**THAT** the Forestry Committee be mandated to continue until the next General Meeting under the direction of the Executive Council;  
**AND FURTHER THAT** the Executive Council approves terms of reference for the operation of the Forestry Committee.  
 Moved by Mel Bevan                      Seconded by Myrtle Michell    CARRIED

### *Guest Speaker: Grand Chief Edward John, First Nations Summit Task Group Member*

- Acknowledged the Elders and members from other territories. This is an important gathering that we all can benefit from and looks forward to the advice and wisdom of our elders.
- Issues to be discussed are forestry, fishery, education and health, the same issues being discussed on all levels (from Provincial to National).
- Tax is an (important) issue with the non-Native population. These taxes are used for services in hospitals, schools and highways (repairs).
- The provincial government has cut treaty negotiation funding in BC by 35%.
- The First Nation Summit has come together collectively to resolve the land question and to resolve it.
- The Nisga'a Nation has taken the initiative and opened their doors to each of our Nations to go and witness their accomplishments in their community.
- Former Prime Minister Elliot Trudeau has said and recognized that Native's have rights.
- Negotiating is an expensive proposition.
- Federal Government and Provincial Government brought together First Nations to talk about aboriginal rights.
- 8 million dollars is spent across Canada in each First Nations community.
- Housing, economic development, education, forestry, land claims and self government are concerns brought to the table.
- Implementation of Treaty negotiations.
- Economic Development is needed to provide jobs for our people
- Protection of our lands and resources to ensure sustainability.
- Infestation of pine beetles causing our forest to die - elders have been warning us for 30 years or more.
- Who's making decisions on fishery and forestry? We need to make the Government understand our issues.
- Legal relationship between First Nations and the Provincial and Federal Government.

*Question and discussion:*

- Right now 79% of the MLAs are Liberals, with the upcoming election, how will tax exemption and the changing of government officials affect treaty?
- Is the 30% cutback in the treaty process being used for the Land Use Protocol? It's a concern that the funding is not being used for land use.

*(Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm)*

**DAY 2 – Friday, May 28, 2004**

Meeting commenced at 9:40 am. Opening prayer by elder Violet Charlie.

Chair: Justa Monk, Co-chair: Gerald Wesley

*Treaty Panel: Overview and Update*

*Wilf Adam, Commissioner, BC Treaty Commission:*

- Welcome to the Chiefs, Hereditary Chiefs and people from neighboring communities.
- 55 First Nations negotiating at 45 tables
- The McLeod Lake Indian Band is involved in the process even though they had treaty benefits added to Treaty 8. They joined the treaty process for the governance aspect.
- Stage 2 - The Readiness Stage: a few First Nations presently in stage 2
- Stage 3 - The Framework Stage: Setting out the agenda. Presently four First Nation's Bands at this stage.
- 40 of 55 Bands presently in Stage 4: The Agreement in Principal Stage
- Stage 5: The Final Stage of treaty. Presently five First Nations, which includes Lheidli T'enneh from Prince George region.
- Maa-nulth First Nations of Port Alberni are presently in Stage 5 of their negotiations. Their goal is to sign and finalized their treaty by next year.
- Sliammon First Nation of Powell River has been in Stage 5 for the past five years.
- State of negotiations of this province.
- Land protection and protected areas that have traditional value.
- Major area in negotiations is land use planning.
- Forestry and the allocation of tenure in our area is another big issue.
- One example of fisheries in our area is the Gitanyow and the Tsimshian. During the first years as a commissioner, the government would not look at it as compensation.
- Taxation is another issue at the table.
- The governance component is important to First Nations but the government seeks to negotiate governance outside of treaty.
- Interim measures is basically funding First Nations to protect resources such as fisheries and provide for economic development
- It's important that First Nations get together (like this) and work collectively so ensure that they are heard and the government listens.
- Currently, there are four (4) priority main tables. The government's spending their resources only on those lead tables has become a problem. The BCTC will meet with the Premier on June 16 to bring forward the issue of limited negotiation resources and the constraints being imposed on others.
- Policies (areas) are a problem. It's been the policy of Canada in any negotiations such as Fisheries to discontinue negotiations if a First Nation chooses to litigate. This is a policy that we should be rid of, as it has never been provided in writing.

- BCTC is currently operating without a Chief Commissioner since Miles Richardson stepped down. This position should be filled as soon as possible.
- Decision on the Haida from the Supreme Court of Canada
- The BC Treaty Commission has allocated \$255 million on treaty to date. \$204 million of that has to be paid back to Canada.

*Gerald D. Wesley, NWTT Co-chair (West):*

- Acknowledged Bonnie Hawley and Lauren Benedict of the North Central Municipal Association. Expressed thanks and appreciation to the Lake Babine Nation for the gracious welcome by their Elders and dancers.
- Acknowledged Lake Babine for their financial contribution and gave thanks for their commitment to NWTT.
- Acknowledged the presence of delegates that came from Haida Gwaii, the Nass Valley, the Tsimshian, the Gitksan, the Carrier, the Sekani and Wet'suwet'en.
- The Northwest Tribal Treaty came about in 1991 confirming a desire to work together.
- In building and establishing relationships, NWTT has reached out to the Northern MLA's offices. We have met with various government officials and have presented them with our issues.
- As Aboriginal people, our relationship has been to treat one another with respect and understand that we are the same.
- A major NWTT initiative for the past 2 years has been the First Nations Governance Act; this a very important issue that we still need to accomplish.
- What do we, as First Nations want with respect to forestry and mining?
- How do we address and plan around the issues of health and education?
- A component of the 1991 agreement and one of the principles is that we shall continue to practice our own tribal political system and laws and we intend these separate jurisdictions to continue.
- We can assist ourselves in helping each other with the issue of treaty.
- Oil and Gas Development whether it is off shore, is a common issue and something we should address. We must protect our territories and begin addressing oil and gas as a critical issue.
- Met with the Premier in Terrace yesterday, this followed the Premier and BC Cabinet meeting with Alberta Premier and Cabinet in Prince Rupert to discuss Northern development issues. Looked at North West planning issues, representatives from Smithers and West, Chamber of Commerce, Alcan Canada, West Fraser Saw Mills, Mining Companies, North West Association, BC Hydro and CNR.
- Premier wants to act on what is needed to improve economic status in BC.
- Premier Site 12 example is the mining and environmental issues. What is required to assist this issue on economical needs?
- Premier stated 15 million dollars available to First Nations for the Northern Development Initiative following the sale of BCR and CN Rail. We as First Nations must recognize and understand what this Northern Initiative is all about. This is an initiative that no one knew existed.
- Presentations were made in Terrace on manufacturing, Alcan, Forestry, Mining, Fishery, Railroads, Infrastructure, Tourism and Training.
- Spoke to First Nations issues and the lack of treaty, the lack of relationship and the lack of First Nations involvement. General discussion included:
  1. Developments and long-term strategies.

2. Branding of Northern BC, First Nations' issues need to be addressed, that should be strong to the government.
  3. Provincial Government on building relationships with the Government and First Nations.
  4. Identifying steps that are useful to our people.
  5. How to train to get our young people ready for Treaty.
- Economy, marketing, forestry
  - We would like some formal relationships between the First Nations and the non-aboriginal community. NWTT build relationships and address issues on what is important to treaty.
  - We could help establish an energy council to deal with energy, oil and pipelines.
  - Suggested a strong strategy of the 2010 Olympics and representation from our area.
  - Participation on the Cruise ship landings in Prince Rupert.
  - Premier's Press Release, following his joint Cabinet meeting:
    1. Forestry, Fishery, and Economic Development
    2. Oil and Gas Development, looking at strengthening developments.
    3. Child and Family Services in partnership with Alberta welfare services.

*Child and Family Services Panel:*

*Betty Patrick, Regional Coordinator, Northern Aboriginal Authority for Families*

Brief background in late fall of 2001 and efforts to give governance back to the community

- Authority in the north, getting the governance fees back to the North
- Mandate for getting this back to the North
- A number of shifts, talking the governance
- Safe report want an aboriginal authority in the North
- There are two child and family authorities, 1 aboriginal and 1 non-aboriginal.
- All shifts been challenging for us; Readiness Criteria in responding to Government to start a work plan. One task is visiting communities; communication peace is an issue that needed to be dealt with.
- Doing a communication mapping piece
- Planning mode, concerns on Provincially over a thousand kids in care, 90% are Aboriginal; we must put a stop to this.
- 944 children that we would like to take home
- Where the children went, those answers were hard to come by
- Money and Resources we put into the land, we need to make a shift make our children a critical issue that needs to be heard
- The message "we as Aboriginal people, will replace the old child welfare system with a new system, designed, administered and controlled by our communities regardless of whether it is through this process or another.
- We need to bring home 852 kids to each of our community and that is a challenge that we need to face
- We need to have commitment from government that we need to have that authority
- The Deputy Minister has announced 3.5 million dollar commitment to boost the adoption initiative while reducing Aboriginal Planning Committee funding by 66%.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> issue the adoption, that they should quit adopting our children to non-native communities.
- That our children should come back to our communities, this is the issue is brought to us from each community.

*Grand Chief Edward John, First Nations Summit Task Group Member*

- Gave thanks to the Hereditary Chiefs for the entertainment the previous evening and is honored to be welcomed.
- Economic governance to make it successful
- The Memorandum of Understanding for children has been signed between the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs and other First Nations organizations.
- Resolution to proceed the North Region Authority for Children and Families, one region is Quesnel
- South region is Fraser Region, Vancouver Region, Vancouver Island Region
- If they set up their own aboriginal authority in their region
- To transfer this in their territory
- Aboriginal will be similar to the Northern Health Authority where they deal with the hospitals
- June 24<sup>th</sup> and June 25<sup>th</sup> community center, planning to release
- Ministry government will not set up this authority until 2006 or 2007.
- Our 5 committees have been audited on the posted planning committees was done by the Government.
- When the audited is finalized the community will deliver or allow the community have access in viewing the Audited Financial Statements.
- How the governance provided funding to resources in our program
- Ensure resources are provided to new s properly
- Question how the resources are being spent properly.
- Last item the planning committees have been reduced on funding, a million dollars have been given
- The money has been reduced and 500,000.00 has been given to each community
- Non-aboriginal community has been banned planning committees
- Meeting in Vancouver on Monday with the 5 planning committees
- What steps need to be taken
- Planning Committee for the North the entire of the Northern committee is a lot
- Delegated authorities that has been established for each communities

*Question and discussion:*

- Upsetting that the government would take our children is not right
- Example, a member came back to our community and did not know his language or culture or any of his traditional background.
- To set up a safe house for our children and have our people take responsibility in ensure their well-being and to teach them our culture ways.
- How can we change the court system?
- Recommendations and concerns in regards to safe house is what we like to hear
- Elder Dennis Alec agrees, our children are sacred; we need to have our children returned back to our communities.
- Spoke with CSTC Family and Child and asked how or where do these children go?
- How can Lake Babine Nation; each 5 communities, can get a safe house going?
- A lot of children are in Non-native homes. Support and agree that if you can bring this up with Minister Kristy Clark.
- LBN would like to build a facility for children in care.
- To get a support letter from each band to support the Aboriginal Authority, letters should be from Chief and Council.

## Resolution 2004-03

**THAT** the Northwest Tribal Nations continue to strongly support the establishment of the North Region Aboriginal Authority for Children and Families.

**THAT** the Northwest Tribal Nations hereby urge the Minister of Children and Families to establish the North Region Aboriginal Authority for Children and Families.

Moved by Dennis Alec

Seconded by Francis Holland

CARRIED

- On behalf of our Nation we don't have authority regarding Children and Families, we don't have a voice I would like Betty Patrick and Ed John to make this a priority.
- The Child Welfare Program it's good it being brought up. Too many young people in the justice process and this are not working for our young people. The system is not working. That is justice portion should be involved in the resolution. To this day advocating members in the court. We need a program up front with the justice. We need to add a justice portion into the resolution.
- This is resolution is based to have this program going.
- To have the resolution open, so that we can add additional items to the resolution

*(Lunch break 1:15 pm)*

*Guest Speaker: National Chief Phil Fontaine, Assembly of First Nations*

- Chief, chairman, hereditary chiefs, thanks for a warm and generous welcome. Inspirational and uplifting. I witness to hear the songs and dances, giving expression of who they are, thanking the crowd
- Wasn't sure he would be here today due to a death in the family
- What he witnessed here is similar of what he saw in Winnipeg.
- He feels at home in BC, so very generous and kind and also very strong about Aboriginal title, strong in what is important to you're community.
- The issues that we face and the challenges before us, strong positions before us. And people get a little testy when it comes to major issues
- The outcome doesn't usually come out positive and the people that immediately came to the defense of our honor.
- Opportunity to express deepest thanks to Herb Morven, so clear in his thinking, our culture, our teaching, and our values in our place.
- Involved in a series of important discussion to federal government to convince them they have to treat us they way they would treat other governments like equals. Treat our government with respect.
- Government should never meet without first Nations.
- We should be at the table as their equals.
- What represent in this country a legitimate and important and as much value as what they represent.
- Phil will be in Toronto, meeting with Federal Government and Provincial Government dealing with Health Issues
- First Nations have been invited but they refused the invitation, the government invited a whole people of aboriginal representatives across Canada.
- Nation to Nation that is not acceptable to us, at least 5 National organizations
- Spoke to Premiere about not attending the meeting, present our position
- 9 billion dollars for health, we've told them you can't fix it without First Nations that can help with Health Issues.
- Housing, Education, Economic Development, Fishery, all of those are important to us.

- Education approx 10 thousand First Nations students that can't attend University or Community College or Tech School because not enough funding for First Nations people.
- This is the position we take to have the students to choose where they can go to school.
- Making head way for Education for students to go to whatever school they like
- Other issues that we need to deal with Federal Government
- Round table in Ottawa, Federal Government that this meeting would be a full opportunity Federal Government.
- This meeting was a success, the Government made a number of commitments to First Nations in public, to all Canadians could see.
- The Federal Government has agreed to work with our leaders to deal with issues that is important to us, such as housing, there is 89 thousands houses that need renovations in 633 First Nations communities across Canada.
- Facing Economic Development, creating jobs that we need.
- As high as 90% that need jobs, all the money we receive out of a dollar 80 cents of a dollar goes into the community, city or town.
- Making sure that we keep this money, all the money.
- Simply this means that our members are poor, what can you do to fix this problem.
- Create First Nations Institutions.
- CMHC out of the way and have First Nations take over, it should be our Institutions that should be dealing with all this not the government.
- Bill C7 - issues of government.
- To demonstrate that we are more than capable than the governments
- Issues of Fisheries, met with the head officials, we try to underline the importance of Fisheries to our people.
- Deputy official Warren that made a commitment to National Chief that he would be here to see what British Columbia issues for the First Nations
- Education, the number of students that can't go to schools because of lack of funding.
- In 1989 made a decision Federal Government made a decision didn't consult with us with our view to this matter and they went ahead and dealt with this matter without First Nations present.
- Treaty right or Aboriginal right, people require a higher education, until 1989 they changed it. The only reason the government paid the education because of public policy.
- Would like support from Chief and Council, Hereditary Chief, Head Clans men to support these issues to the National level

*(Closing comments to Nation Chief Fontaine from Herbert Morven for NWTT and Chief Emma Palmantier of Lake Babine Nation)*

### *First Nations Governance Centre - Overview presented by Satsan (Herb George)*

The mandate of the Centre will be to support and enhance our ability to govern ourselves. It will be an independent, national centre offering the support we need to strengthen our day-to-day governance operations and advance our efforts to implement the inherent right of self-government.

Four proposed program and service areas are identified and described. They are:

- l Community Governance Services - institute traditional forms of governance, enhance fiscal efficiency and inter-government relations and developing constitutions and codes.

- | Professional Development Programs - the center will ensure that our leaders and people working in First Nations governance will be able to access training and leadership courses in community and organizational development and management.
- | Land Law and Governance Research Program - the center will support a proactive research agenda that looks to both First Nations and Canadian legal traditions.
- | Public Education Programs - will ensure broad public access to an increased understanding of First Nations governance and its place in the structure of Canada.

Over the period of March to June 2004 the First Nations Governance Centre Advisory Committee guided by an Elder's Advisory Council and chaired by Satsan (Herb George):

- | Will focus on extensive consultation and research activities with national, regional and community based First Nations;
- | Recommendations for the structure and function of the Centre to be submitted to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in June 2004;
- | Purposes of this discussion paper, the term "First Nations" refers to the various governments of, and for, those first peoples of Canada.
- | Whose ancestry or origins arises from the land, territories and places they continue to use and occupy.
- | To classify our people in the Canadian Constitution or by the Department of Indian Affairs.
- | The focus is on the direction and possible programs of the Centre as well as the National discussion process that will unfold from now until the end of June.
- | The Government of Canada has firmly committed itself to the establishment of a Centre that is envisioned in this paper.
- | Main office will be in Ottawa, in addition four regional offices will be established.
- | The First Nations Governance Centre will be based upon the principle of choice.
- | The Centre will operate through the control and direction of First Nations.
- | The Centre will develop programs and services that are culturally enriched and empowered by our traditions, customs, laws and inherent governing powers.
- | The Centre will support our efforts to gain recognition for our jurisdictional authorities and to achieve the characteristics of good government.
- | The objectives of the Centre will be to support and enhance our efforts to govern ourselves.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples noted that to be effective, to make things happen any government must have three basic attributes; legitimacy, power and resources. Legitimacy refers to public confidence in and support for the government. Power is the acknowledged legal capacity to act. Resources consist of the physical means of acting.

Outcomes of the Center's efforts will stem from its work with our Nations in helping to enhance our governments and become more effective and efficient.

Positive community and Economic Development will result in reducing the costs associated with poverty as our citizens begin to experience an improved standard of living and quality of life.

- The Centre will work with all First Nations to help develop and enhance the principles and values that our traditions can contribute to contemporary governance.
- The First Nations Governance Centre will support First Nations in the design and creation of organizations that provide resources, services and information to help in the delivery of efficient government services for our citizens.

### **1. Community Governance Services**

- Traditional Governance
- Institution Building
- Program and Service Effectiveness
- Fiscal Efficiency and Government Relations
- Constitutions and Codes

## **2. Professional Development Programs**

- Liaison with Public Post Secondary Education Institutions
- Training
- Development of Leadership Programs

## **3. Land, Law and Governance Research Program**

- Justice
- Legal Research and Education
- Publications and Legal Library
- National Research Network
- Liaison with Research Institutes

## **4. Public Education Programs**

- Conferences
- Communications
- Media Services

- l *To guide the unfolding of this notion, the Commission proposed four principles for a renewed relationship: recognition, respect, sharing, and responsibility.*
- l *The First Nations Governance Centre will base its work on these four principles.*
- l *The First Nations governance, properly pursued and empowered, can and should become the focal point for a new understanding of Canada now and into the future.*
- l *This is a vision of what the First Nations Governance Centre can be.*
- l *To give full effect to the Centre, it will be important for us as First Nations to express our views about the future and the priorities.*
- l *First Nations governance belongs to First Nations.*

This will accomplish its purposes only if it belongs to First Nations.

### NWTT Economic Strategy Initiative Update – Dr. Kenneth Whyte

- Dr. Ken Whyte provided general background and issues to date regarding the NWTT Economic Strategy Initiative
- The project was approved in 2003 and is funded thru the Provincial Government. The project is intended to research, seek community input and develop recommendations for a First Nations driven economic strategy for Northern BC.
- Will wrap up in March 2005. Will continue to seek community-based input, eg. Will be hosting an economic development forum in Prince Rupert June 2, 3, 4 and another in Prince George on June 16, 17, 18.
- We will also continue to meet and explore relationships with Community Future Corporation, local governments, industry and economic development agencies in order to implement our strategy.

In closing, Gerald thanked the Lake Babine Nation (host) and all delegates and participants of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Assembly of the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations. Looks forward to many more gatherings and much collective effort for all First Nations in our area.

Assembly adjourned 6:30 pm