



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS / ASSEMBLÉE DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS
OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL CHIEF / BUREAU DE LA CHEFFE NATIONALE

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December 15, 2022

His Majesty The King
Buckingham Palace
London SW1A 1AA

Sent via Mail Only

Re: Repudiation of Terra Nullius and Doctrine of Discovery

Your Majesty,

May I first offer you, the Queen Consort, your sons, and family my continued prayers during this transitional period as the Royal family continues to grieve the loss of your matriarch. As you may be aware, I attended the funeral of the late Queen to honour Her Majesty's life of service and to support your accession to King. I did so with great solemnity and responsibility, as part of the Healing Path Forward for the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in respect to Crown relations.

As National Chief of the AFN, I am writing this letter to support the calls of the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) Resolution #35/2022, the First Nations Summit Resolution #1022.11 and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs Resolution #2022-56 entitled, "*Call to Formally Repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery*" (enclosed) which was presented, affirmed, and endorsed by consensus at our respective Chiefs Assemblies in full rejection of the racist and colonial Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius* used to forcefully dispossess sovereign First Nations from their territories.

When we spoke at Rideau Hall in May of this year, you expressed a desire to "come to terms with the darker and more difficult aspects" of our shared history. For us, those include acts of violent dispossession, assimilation, and genocide carried out under the mantle of colonial expansion. Foremost among those was the inhumanity of the residential institutions. When we spoke, I appealed to the Crown to issue an apology for the actions of the Anglican Church in the multi-generational devastation wrought upon our communities by residential institutions.

From the empathy you expressed during our conversation, I saw firsthand your commitment to reconciliation. In that spirit, and as a next step on the path to healing and reconciliation, may I respectfully propose a Royal Premiere in London of *The Doctrine of Recovery*, a film that is presently receiving nominations at film festivals across North America. This month, *The Doctrine of Recovery* won the prestigious Social Justice Film Festival Award.



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The Doctrine of Recovery is a call to action for truth and reconciliation, which includes a clear repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery, something Pope Francis failed to do during the papal visit to Canada. My intention would be to invite a delegation of First Nations' leaders to join me in London for the premiere, and to reach out to other Indigenous leaders and Tribal Nations throughout the Commonwealth to send delegates to attend the Royal Premiere. Sir, in this visually beautiful film, you will see and hear four generations of First Nations women powerfully articulate the issues and legacy of colonialism that must be addressed as we seek solutions to those "darker and more difficult aspects" you expressed a desire to reconcile in our conversation this May.

Holding this Royal Premiere of *The Doctrine of Recovery* could not only represent a symbolic new dawn of reconciliation but is in accord with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #45, which ultimately calls for a Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation to be issued by the Crown. This initiative is now also mandated by The First Nations Leadership Council who wrote to you on behalf of the aforementioned BCAFN on November 22, 2022. We have tentatively identified the South Bank and Barbican as appropriate venues, but we would hope to work with and follow the advice of your staff on logistics.

I have the honour to be Your Majesty's willing partner in what I believe to be our shared quest for justice, truth, and reconciliation.

Ninankamon!

Wishing you Peace beyond all Understanding,

National Chief RoseAnne Archibald

Cc: Kúkpi7 Judy Wilson
Neskonlith Indian Band
BCAFN