



AFN Yukon Regional Office  
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### Statement in Support of Sipekne'katik First Nation and Mi'kmaq Fishers

(Whitehorse, Yukon, October 20, 2020) – Yukon Regional Chief Kluane Adamek and the Assembly of First Nations – Yukon Region (AFN Yukon) stand in solidarity with Sipekne'katik First Nation and the Mi'kmaq fishers as they continue to fight racism and violence while attempting to exercise their treaty right to the Sipekne'katik moderate livelihood fishery. We urge the federal government to act immediately and decisively in support of the Sipekne'katik First Nation and the Mi'kmaq fishers and their treaty rights.

The historic lobster fishery opened last month to immediate and escalating acts of racist violence. The fishery is built upon a legal foundation of historic treaty rights confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Marshall* (1999), and the federal government has a duty to unequivocally support and uphold the fishery and protect the fishers who are at risk.

Tragically, this is just one of many examples of systemic racism against Indigenous peoples that we have seen in recent weeks. The violence against the Mi'kmaq community and the refusal on behalf of the RCMP to protect First Nation members is a clear reflection of the systemic violence that exists across Canada and the unequal response of law enforcement towards Indigenous communities.

We call on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, his ministers, and the RCMP to take seriously their role in enforcing Canadian law to protect Mi'kmaq communities and their constitutional right through the Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1760 to earn a moderate living. You can and must do more to protect the rights and lives of Indigenous peoples across this country. Anything less reinforces the systemic racism that continues to hurt our people.

From coast-to-coast-to-coast, people are standing up and speaking out against the violence and acts of racism that have been perpetrated against the Mi'kmaq. We urge all Canadians to recognize that we need leadership, not politics, on this issue. We encourage every person to add their voice and to push our federal, provincial and territorial governments to take action to condemn this racist violence and to recognize and implement First Nations inherent and treaty rights across this country.

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For more media requests, please contact:

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**A Yukon that Leads**

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