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## Regional Chief Kluane Adamek Statement on the Speech from the Throne

(Whitehorse, Yukon, November 24, 2021) –The AFN Yukon Regional Chief Kluane Adamek – “Aagé” – released the following statement on today’s Speech from the Throne.

“I feel so privileged to have been able to watch, for the first time, an Indigenous woman delivering the Speech from the Throne. This is a significant moment for all of us in this country, a moment that is more than symbolic; it represents a step forward for Indigenous people and serves as an inspiration for an entire generation of young women. The lighting of the Qulliq, the traditional drumming, and hearing Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon speak the words in Inuktitut are important changes. Thank you, Your Excellency, for all you stand for and for all you represent.

The focus of the 2021 throne speech is clearly on the environment and climate change, and it’s about time. Yukon First Nations have been demanding action on the climate crisis for many years now. Our planet is facing a crisis that will impact our very existence, and the results of inaction are already being felt every day. To hear that the government will focus on producing clean steel, environmentally responsible transportation, and has committed to cutting gas and oil sector emissions is encouraging as we look towards a net zero future. Working with First Nations and rights holders to get this done, is at the core of this promise. We have always been the protectors of Mother Earth and we know what it will take to heal her.

Canada must be a leader to Canadians and all those here at home, but also to governments around the world. We need to show citizens, communities, and leaders from across the globe that this change is possible. The federal government has made its promises, and now its duty is to fulfill these promises in honour of the next seven generations that are to come.

In this throne speech we heard renewed commitments to implement the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to implement the Calls to Justice and to examine the critical changes called for by the inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We also heard commitments to ensure compensation for victims of child and family services policies. I acknowledge that the work has begun, but there is a long road ahead. The government is committed to ending boil water advisories and to implementing distinction based solutions to mental health challenges is important, but we have heard this before.

Yukon First Nations will be immediately served by commitments to the housing accelerator fund, to a homebuyers incentive, and to a rent to own policy. As Yukon First Nations continue to manage, and prepare to recover from, the effects of the COVID - 19 pandemic, we are facing a mental health and wellness crisis in our communities. Yukon First Nations require specific funding to address this mental

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health and wellness and community safety crisis, and we hope to see these commitments in the forthcoming federal budget

I applaud commitments shared by the Governor General, confronting the hard questions will not be comfortable, but it is necessary. Truth and reconciliation are about more than symbolism. They are about action.”

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