

First Nations Summit

STATEMENT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
JULY 8, 2021**

First Nations Summit congratulates AFN National Chief-elect RoseAnne Archibald on her election

Coast Salish Territory, Vancouver, British Columbia – The First Nations Summit (FNS) Executive congratulates RoseAnne Archibald on her historic election to the position of National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations. Ms. Archibald is the first woman to serve in the role of AFN National Chief since the AFN was established in 1982.

First Nations leadership from across Canada participated this week in the virtual Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Annual General Assembly and the election for National Chief. Ms. Archibald was elected to her first term as National Chief following the fifth ballot and subsequent concession by second place candidate, Reginald Bellerose.

Ms. Archibald is elected at a critical time. Indigenous issues, such as the recent confirmations of unmarked burials at former Indian residential School (IRS) sites and the recent passage of Bill C-15 to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), are at the forefront of political issues in Canada moving towards the next federal election. The FNS is hopeful that Indigenous communities across Canada will be united in collective efforts at the local, regional, national, and international levels to ensure our voices are heard as we work to close the disproportionate socio-economic gaps faced by our communities, while also ensuring the preservation of our cultures and languages.

The FNS looks forward to a positive working relationship with National Chief Archibald. In particular, we look forward to working with her on the recognition and implementation of First Nations' Title, Rights and Treaty Rights; ongoing treaty negotiations in BC; implementation of UNDRIP and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action; obtaining the necessary supports for communities dealing with the confirmation of unmarked burials at former Indian Residential School (IRS) sites; the climate emergency; MMIWG issues; and improving the overall economic and social conditions in our communities.

The FNS expresses appreciation to the other six candidates who put their names forward for National Chief: Reginald Bellerose – Muskowekwan First Nation, SK; Jodi Calahoo-Stonehouse – Michel First Nation, AB; Lee Crowchild – Tsuut'ina Nation, AB; Alvin Fiddler – Muskrat Dam First Nation, ON; Kevin T. Hart – Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, MB; and Dr. Cathy Martin – Listuguj First Nation, QC. We appreciate their resolve and commitment to running in the election for National Chief and for their significant contributions in their respective leadership roles to improve the lives of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

-30-

The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. The Summit is also an NGO in Special Consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Further information on the First Nations Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

For further information:

Lydia Hwitsum, FNS Political Executive:	778-875-2157
Cheryl Casimer, FNS Political Executive:	604-868-0032
Robert Phillips, FNS Political Executive:	778-875-4463

