



Canada

End the Criminalization, Harassment and Intimidation of Wet'suwet'en Land Defenders

The Wet'suwet'en Nation's unceded traditional territory is in the province of British Columbia, Canada. For several years now, Wet'suwet'en land defenders have been harassed, intimidated, forcibly removed and criminalized by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) for opposing the construction of the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) pipeline on their territories.

The Wet'suwet'en have never given up their title to their unceded, ancestral territory. The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs are the authorities of the Nation according to Wet'suwet'en law and as affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada's *Delgamuukw-Gisday'wa* decision. They oppose the pipeline's construction on behalf of all five Wet'suwet'en clans. Nevertheless, pipeline construction is proceeding without the free, prior and informed consent of the Wet'suwet'en Nation.

Their lifestyle and traditions are being affected by the construction of the CGL pipeline. The Wedzin Kwa (Morice River) in Wet'suwet'en territory is one of the last sources of fresh water and salmon spawning grounds. The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs fear that the construction of the pipeline is damaging their rivers. As stated by Chief Woos;

"Our water reserve, water sources, waterways, and wildlife pattern have all been disrupted by the pipeline. Our natural harvesting of the salmon I'm sure is going to be disrupted. Our peaceful existence together has been disrupted."

Wet'suwet'en land defenders and their supporters who oppose the construction of the pipeline are experiencing surveillance, harassment, intimidation, and unlawful arrest at the hands of the pipeline's private security company and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

Twenty land defenders were charged with criminal contempt (in June and July 2022) by the British Columbia Prosecution Service for allegedly disobeying an injunction order to stay away from pipeline construction sites, even though these sites are situated on the Nation's unceded, ancestral territory. Five of the land defenders pled guilty in December 2022, as a result of their bail conditions, which prohibited them from being on the Wet'suwet'en Nation's territory and any other frontline resistance against extractive projects across Canada. Five others had the charges dropped against them, and one is awaiting next steps.

The remaining nine land defenders have already started trial in May 2023, or will go on trial in October 2023, and January 2024. If found guilty, they could be sentenced to prison.

Take Action: Tell the BC Government to drop the charges against Wet'suwet'en Land Defenders

Ask British Columbia to drop the charges against Wet'suwet'en land defenders. B.C. and Canada are burning from a recording breaking wildfire, the solution is to listen to Indigenous Voices and respect their rights. Defending their ancestral lands and waters is not a crime, it is part of our solution to the climate crisis.

David Eby, Premier of B.C.
PO Box 9041
Station Provincial Government
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Email: Premier@gov.bc.ca

Niki Sharma, Attorney General of B.C.
PO Box 9044
Station Provincial Government
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Email: AG.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Phone: 250-387-6411

Hashtags: #W4R23 #W4RCanada

Send Support to the Wet'suwet'en

Send letters and or postcards with your messages of solidarity to the criminalized land defenders and the entire Wet'suwet'en nation to express your support for the protection of their unceded traditional territory.

Amnesty International Toronto Office
1992 Yonge St,
Toronto, ON
M4S 1Z7

