

**Gwich'inat Eenjit**  
**Gàdatr'igwijiłcheii Gidilii**  
*Gwich'in nan, nakhwek'yùu ts'àt gwitr'it*  
*tthak nakhwidavee gwiheezàa eenjit*



**Gwich'in Tribal Council**  
*Gwich'in land, culture & economy for a better future*

**NOTES FOR REMARKS BY GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL (GTC)  
GRAND CHIEF BOBBIE JO GREENLAND-MORGAN AT THE  
SIGNING OF THE GTC-GNWT MOU ON ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**

**Gwich'in Tribal Council Headquarters**

**Inuvik, Northwest Territories**

Tuesday, June 11, 2019

**FINAL FOR DELIVERY**

- Thank you David for your Introduction.
- Welcome Minister Schumann and welcome to your colleagues from the Government of the Northwest Territories and welcome as well to my colleagues from the Gwich'in Tribal Council.
- Welcome also to members of the media who are here to cover the important step that Minister Schumann and I will be taking today to formally finalize the new Memorandum of Understanding – the “MOU” – on Economic Development, between the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT).
- ***This is an important step in the evolution of the Gwich'in efforts to build our Nation based on our treaties.***
- The Gwich'in are North America's northern most First Nation. Since time immemorial the Gwich'in have occupied traditional territories spanning what is today the Northwest Territories, the Yukon and Alaska.
- In July of 1921, the Chiefs and Headmen of the Gwich'in signed Treaty 11 in Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson with representatives of the Crown. In so doing, ***our ancestors' priority was to preserve the traditional Gwich'in way of life based on harvesting the fish and the Porcupine Caribou within our traditional territory.***
- In 1992 the Gwich'in signed our modern treaty – the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (GCLCA) – with Canada and the GNWT. At that time the Gwich'in Tribal Council – the organization that I now lead – was formed to represent Gwich'in in regard to implementation of our modern treaty and to protect Gwich'in rights and interests in the Mackenzie Delta and beyond.
- Chapter 10 – *Economic Measures*, is an important element of our modern treaty. Similar to the priority of our ancestors in signing Treaty 11 in 1921, the objective of Chapter 10 of our modern treaty is also to maintain and strengthen the traditional Gwich'in economy based on harvesting fish and wildlife resources. This is a goal that we continue to pursue.

- We believe that by concluding the new MOU on Economic Development with the GNWT and by working together as partners with Minister Schumann and with his GNWT colleagues, we will be able to strengthen the traditional Gwich'in economy in all of its manifestations, including its harvesting, arts and crafts and cultural dimensions.
- We believe that we can also move beyond the base of this focus on our traditional economy. We can enhance our economic opportunities and our economic presence by working in partnership with the GNWT to strengthen and develop enhanced Gwich'in economic presence and capacity in other, priority sectors of the economy.
- An important goal of the MOU is to facilitate linkage between Gwich'in and GNWT economic development efforts by collaborating in developing the economy of the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) and the economic capacity of the Gwich'in in common strategic priority economic sectors, such as mining and tourism.
- We have already initiated work in this area through assistance provided to the GTC by Minister Schumann's department to help us develop a *Mineral Development and Mining Strategy* that is nearing completion. This is an example of the kind of strategic economic sector focused collaborative approach that the MOU on Economic Development will help facilitate.
- This kind of cooperation and collaboration has been the driving force behind the steps that have brought us here today to finalize the new MOU. It has been co-developed by officials of the GTC and of the Industry, Tourism and Investment Department of the GNWT.
- Minister Schumann and I have discussed this initiative together with the GTC Board of Directors and with Minister Schumann's Cabinet colleagues. Collectively we have endorsed the new approach and we directed our respective officials to complete work on defining the elements and the content of the MOU. This has led us to this event today.
- The new MOU is also intended to serve as a means of contributing in a tangible way to the on-going process of reconciliation.

- It will modernize and clarify the scope and focus of the collaboration between the GTC and the GNWT in support of the objectives established in Chapter 10 of our modern treaty. It will also support the overall and sector specific economic development objectives of the GNWT.
- I will therefore be very pleased to join Minister Schumann in a few minutes to formally finalize our new Memorandum of Understanding on Economic Development.
- Mahsi Cho.