

Unist'ot'en matriarchs arrested. Stand with Unist'ot'en now!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
February 10, 2020



Unist'ot'en Territory, Feb 10, 2020 - A convoy of armed RCMP tactical units has invaded sovereign and unceded Unist'ot'en Territory to enforce Coastal GasLink's injunction. Our Unist'ot'en Matriarchs and lands defenders have been forcibly

removed off their lands.

Unist'ot'en Matriarchs Freda Huson (Chief Howihkat), Brenda Michell (Chief Geltiy), and Dr. Karla Tait have been forcibly removed off our territories and arrested. Our matriarchs were arrested while holding a ceremony to call on our ancestors and to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. We, the Unist'ot'en, know that violence on our lands and violence on our women are connected. During ceremony, we hung red dresses to remember the spirits of the murdered women, girls and two spirit people taken from us. We were holding a cremation for the Canadian Indigenous Reconciliation industry as the RCMP battered through the gates. Land defenders, including Victoria Redsun (Denesuline), Autumn Walken (Nlaka'pamux), and Pocholo Alen Conception have also been arrested.

Unist'ot'en condemns these violent, colonial arrests and stark violations of Wet'suwet'en law, Canadian law, and of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). This is also a clear violation of the recent directive from the UN Committee on Racial Discrimination (CERD) requiring Canada to halt the Coastal GasLink pipeline project and withdraw RCMP from our territory in order to avoid further violations of Wet'suwet'en, constitutional, and international law.

We, as Wet'suwet'en, have never ceded our sovereign title and rights over the 22,000 square kilometers of our land, waters, and resources within our Yintah. Our 'Anuc niwh'it'ën (Wet'suwet'en law) and feast governance systems remain intact and continue to govern our people and our lands. We recognize the authority of these systems. The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs are the Title Holders, and maintain the authority and jurisdiction to make decisions on unceded lands.

Our Wet'suwet'en Territory is divided into 5 clans and 13 house groups. Each clan within the Wet'suwet'en Nation has full jurisdiction under our law to control access to their respective territories. We have governed ourselves sustainably since time

immemorial. The Unist'ot'en (Dark House) is occupying and using our traditional territory as we have for centuries. Our homestead is a peaceful expression of our connection to our territory and demonstrates the continuous use and occupation of our territories in accordance with our governance structure. Our Unist'ot'en Yin'tah is a place of healing. It is home to Wet'suwet'en people seeking refuge from colonial trauma. People recovering from addiction. People reconnecting with the land.

We have the strength of our ancestors within us. We have the solidarity of our Indigenous relatives and allies with us. We have the power of people shutting down railways, highways, ports, and government offices all around this country. Thank you to people all around this planet making our struggle your struggle. The flames of resistance and the resurgence of Indigenous land reclamation give us strength. We know our neighbours and relatives are with us. We know the two-leggeds and the four-leggeds are watching over us. These arrests don't intimidate us. Police enforcement doesn't intimidate us. Colonial court orders don't intimidate us. Men in suits and their money don't intimidate us. We are still here. We will always be there. This is not over.

[ALL EYES ON UNIST'OT'EN: February 10, 2020](https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2020/02/10/unistoten-matriarchs-arrested-stand-with-unistoten-now/)

