

## GWICHYA GWICH'IN TO NEGOTIATE COMMUNITY SELF-GOVERNMENT

**Tsiigehtchic, Gwich'in Settlement Area** (November 1, 2022) – The Gwichya Gwich'in Council of Tsiigehtchic will forward a written request to both the governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories to enter into negotiations with a view to concluding self-government agreements which enable the Gwichya Gwich'in to govern their affairs and to administer resources, programs and services, as appropriate to the circumstances of the Gwichya Gwich'in.

A provision of the *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* (section 5.1 of Appendix B - Self-Government Framework Agreement) provides:

*Government shall enter into negotiations with the Gwich'in in each Gwich'in community where a written request to negotiate is made by a Designated Gwich'in Organization.*

At their September 21st and October 27<sup>th</sup> meetings, the Gwichya Gwich'in Council censured the actions of the Grand Chief of the Gwich'in Tribal Council for showing contempt of and disrespect to the Gwichya Gwich'in Council by obstructing it in the carrying out of its governance functions and self-governance negotiations, and by hindering its duly-elected leadership and staff in the performance of their duties.

On October 5, 2022, the Board of Directors of the Gwich'in Tribal Council suspended the Gwichya Gwich'in Council Interim President as a GTC Board Director.

The GGC also condemns the Grand Chief (in his capacity as Lead Negotiator) for unilaterally suspending and barring their duly-appointed Gwich'in Government Negotiator from the Gwich'in Government Main Negotiations Table and for withholding Main Table position documents without justification; without full support or consensus from the Gwich'in Government Negotiations Team; without consultation in writing to the GGC; and without authority from the GTC Board of Directors, of which the GGC is a full and equal member. The Grand Chief / Lead Negotiator has never explained his actions to the GGC.

The Gwichya Gwich'in Council is the governing body of the Gwichya Gwich'in under the *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* and is responsible for all decisions with respect to its governance including its physical, financial and human resources. It has a fiduciary responsibility to protect its rights and interests as a full and equal partner on the Board of Directors of the Gwich'in Tribal Council and on the Gwich'in Government Negotiations Process including at the Main Negotiations Table and on the Gwich'in Government Negotiations Team.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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