



## GITKSAN CHIEFS' OFFICE

February 7, 2013

### **Open Letter: Simgiigyet**

#### **Chiefs office staff reductions needed to maintain Hereditary Chiefs legal defence**

Staff members at the Hereditary Chiefs office have been given lay-off notice until the end of March so that funds are available for the legal costs of defending the Chiefs against legal action from the Gitksan Government Commission (GGC) and Gitksan Indian Band Councillors. Note that Canada is funding GGC in this litigation.

The GTS office will continue with business as usual until the March 31, 2013, end of the fiscal year. We expect to hear by then if Canada will negotiate reconciliation with the Hereditary Chiefs; this decision will follow a meeting of the GTS with Canada last November when we discussed Canada's new approach to Treaties.

Between now and the end of March not only are we protecting funds but providing for a final healing period following internal concerns that have now been corrected to the Chiefs' satisfaction.

The protection of Gitksan rights and title will continue as Canada and BC have offered Gitksan land to two Tsimshian band councils in an Agreement in Principle.

Additionally all timber harvesting on Gitksan land is now jeopardized by BC's failure to consult the Gitksan, a clear breach of a 2003 agreement between the Hereditary Chiefs and BC.

Yours Sincerely,

*for* Jim Angus  
Chairperson  
Gitksan Treaty Society