PROVINCE AND UBCM RENEW COMMITMENT TO FIRST NATIONS

PENTICTON – The Province and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to work together on the negotiation and implementation of agreements encompassed by the New Relationship with First Nations, Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Michael de Jong announced today.

“This MOU is evidence that the New Relationship with First Nations is expanding, and that local governments recognize the importance of building partnerships with their First Nations neighbours,” said de Jong. “The renewed MOU enhances decision-making and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the Province and local governments as we negotiate agreements with First Nations.”

The revised document replaces an MOU signed in 2003, as well as two previous protocol agreements which dealt with local government participation in treaty negotiations. The revised MOU reflects the development of the relationship between the Province and the UBCM in response to the evolution of the treaty process and progress made since the New Relationship was established in 2005.

The MOU renews a commitment by the Province and local governments to:

- continue a process for local government participation in the negotiation of treaties;
- consult and exchange information with local governments on other agreements outside the B.C. treaty process; and
- consult on matters that will have a significant impact on local government programs and services.

“The expanded MOU provides a role for local governments in New Relationship discussions,” said UBCM president Susan Gimse. “We are pleased to receive a commitment from the Province that will see early and ongoing consultation with local governments on New Relationship negotiations that may affect local government jurisdiction.”

- more -
The Province of British Columbia is committed to work with local governments to improve relations with First Nations and to build a New Relationship with Aboriginal people based on mutual respect and principles of recognition and reconciliation of Aboriginal rights. To read a copy of the MOU and learn more about the New Relationship, visit [www.gov.bc.ca/arr](http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr).

-30-

Contact: Maria Wilkie
Communications Director
Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
250 953-3211
250 361-7720 (cell)

Paul Taylor
Relationships and Communications Advisor
UBCM
250 490-2388

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province’s news feeds using RSS, visit the Province’s website at [www.gov.bc.ca](http://www.gov.bc.ca).