



August 11, 2023

NOTICE RE: AQAM RESPONSE TO DRUG AND GANG RELATED DEATHS AND VIOLENCE

Ki?suk kyukyit ?aqamnik and other members of the ?aqam ?amak?is community,

In follow up to our July 6th 2023 message to the community, ?aqam Nasu?kin and Council have been meeting with our Elders to discuss the recent tragedy that claimed the life of Anna May Morigeau and other community members forever affecting the lives of our children, families and the entire Community. We must work together to avoid such tragedies occurring again.

Our recent community tragedy is the direct result of gangs and those affiliated with gangs pushing drugs in our community which has created the conditions for violence and death to occur.

We have our highest priority being the protection of our Elders, children, and families. We write to share with you that we are taking the following steps to provide that protection:

1. We made the attached **Declaration of a State of Emergency** that calls upon:

- a. All persons on ?aqam ?amak?is must step up to their responsibilities towards one another to ensure safety in our community by:
 - Stopping the gossip. Secondhand information is useless. Updates will be provided as necessary.
 - Allowing professionals to do their work in making our community safer.
 - Reporting illegal and suspicious incidents to the RCMP. Also inform the appropriate staff and Council members immediately. In doing so, you are potentially saving lives.
- b. Canada and British Columbia take all necessary steps to fulfill their responsibilities regarding the investigation and prosecution of crimes on ?aqam ?amak?is that have to do with the gangs and their drug trafficking. And that Canada and British Columbia immediately increase services available to ?aqamnik who are either living with drug addictions or have family members living with drug addictions.





2. We are sending copies of the Declaration of a State of Emergency to the following federal and provincial departments and others, and we will follow up with each of them to determine what they are willing to do to respond to our calls for action and how we can work together to achieve safety on ?aqam ?amak?is:

- a. Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- b. Crown Counsel Prosecution Services
- c. First Nation Health Authority
- d. The Province of British Columbia's Attorney General

- e. The Province of British Columbia's Ministry of Health
 - f. The City of Cranbrook, B.C.
 - g. The City Kimberley
 - h. Emergency Services Society
 - i. ʔakisq̓nuk First Nation,
 - j. Lower Kootenay Indian Band (Yaqan Nukiy)
 - k. Tobacco Plains Indian Band (Yaq̓it ʔa·knuq̓h̓it)
 - l. Shuswap Indian Band
 - m. Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
 - n. Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of Montana
 - o. Ktunaxa Nation Council
 - p. BC First Nations Leadership Council
 - q. And all other agencies as necessary.
3. We are reviewing the ʔaq̓am Annual Budget and all ʔaq̓am revenue sources to identify which funds we can shift towards:
- a. Helping ʔaq̓amnik who live with drug addictions to access the services and supports they need to overcome those addictions. This may include making funds available to support the families of those ʔaq̓amnik in understanding drug addictions and creating family plans to support their loved ones while also focusing on self-care.
 - b. Keeping ʔaq̓amnik safe from the harmful effects of the gangs/brotherhood and drug crisis we are living in, and taking all steps within our control to mitigate, and ideally eliminate, those harmful effects.
4. We are preparing for active monitoring of ʔaq̓am Lands for compliance with the *Trespass and Access to ʔaq̓am Lands Law, 2017*. This may involve a Council-appointed Task Force, or the engagement of professional law enforcement officers.
5. We are engaging with ʔaq̓am legal counsel to identify what other authorities ʔaq̓am may exercise to strengthen our ability to keep community members safe, through the use of urgent laws enacted under our Land Code, through the revitalization of our traditional laws around banishment, or any other options that may be available to us.

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THIS DECLARATION IS ENDORSED BY THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

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?AQ'AM

James

X. Pottanaru

Dorothy Apani

Debra White

Robert Williams

Williams

David Sykes

Denise Brink

Kura Bidstone

Pierre

Betha Andrews

John

[Signature]

Arlene Adams

Sherry Sebastia

Bernadette Marigae

Pete Sanchez

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Pauline

McClough

Tim Mc

Paul, Ktunaxa Nation Member