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PRESS RELEASE

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, British Columbia Assembly of First Nations, and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada announce National First Nations Sustainable Economic Development Strategy

Toronto, ON, Sept. 27th, 2016... Tonight, in Ottawa, ON, Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB), British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) announced the National First Nations Sustainable Economic Development Strategy.

The development of the strategy will be conducted through a partnership between the CCAB and BCAFN, and supported by INAC to deliver a roadmap for sustainable economic development to First Nations peoples in Canada. It will identify First Nations business aspirations, current and potential capacity, opportunities and critical challenges to community economic development.

Speakers at tonight's announcement included the **Honourable Carolyn Bennett**, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, **Chief Shane Gottfriedson**, BCAFN Regional Chief and **J.P. Gladu**, President & CEO, CCAB. Also in attendance was AFN **National Chief Perry Bellegarde**, AFN Ontario **Chief Isadore Day**, and **Senator Murray Sinclair**.

"CCAB is committed to Indigenous research on shared platforms to fuel tomorrow's partnerships and sustainable economic certainty and prosperity. The National First Nations Sustainable Economic Development Strategy is an exciting opportunity for Indigenous research and statistics to begin the important first steps on the path to economic reconciliation for Indigenous peoples in Canada today." said JP Gladu, President and CEO of CCAB.

The research partnership will be supported by cutting edge data analytics systems and deliver actionable information for First Nations communities, businesses, government and corporations to improve socio-economic outcomes across the country.

"As the Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief for British Columbia, I am excited to begin the important work in developing a national strategy for sustainable economic development in partnership with the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, and based on the principles of reconciliation. In order to advance reconciliation, we must build bridges. We must work together to ensure more positive, constructive, and meaningful relationships with government and industry, and in turn, we must work together to lift our people from poverty." said BCAFN Chief Shane Gottfriedson.

Minister Bennett reflected on the importance of the initiative, stating: “All of Canada benefits when Indigenous people are full participants in our nation’s economy. I am pleased to see that our collaborative efforts have resulted in the continued growth of First Nation, Métis and Inuit businesses from coast to coast to coast. The development of the new National First Nations Economic Development Strategy highlights opportunities and initiatives that will help further increase the participation of Indigenous people in the Canadian economy. Our government looks forward to working with BCAFN and CCAB on these exciting opportunities.”

Also tonight, the CCAB and Environics announced the release of *Promise and Prosperity: The 2016 Aboriginal Business Survey*. This comprehensive report on Indigenous entrepreneur’s highlights innovation and optimism in the Indigenous economy. “The results of this survey show a diverse and vibrant Indigenous economy, which is achieving impressive growth and innovation,” says Senior Manager, Research for CCAB. Exciting findings include an increase of 15% in the number of profitable Aboriginal businesses across Canada.

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About CCAB

CCAB is committed to the full participation of Aboriginal peoples in Canada’s economy. A national nonprofit, non-partisan association, CCAB offers knowledge, resources, and programs to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal owned companies that foster economic opportunities for Aboriginal peoples and Businesses across Canada.

About the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN)

The British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) represents the 203 First Nations in British Columbia and works to advance First Nations rights and interests in accordance with the vision set out by BC Chiefs. Visit <http://bcafn.ca>



About INAC

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) supports Aboriginal people (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) and Northerners in their efforts to improve social well-being and economic prosperity, develop healthier, more sustainable communities and participate more fully in Canada's political, social and economic development to the benefit of all Canadians.

Summary

The CCAB, BCAFN, and INAC announce the National First Nations Economic Development Strategy. The three-year project will identify First Nations business aspirations, current and potential capacity, opportunities and critical challenges to community economic development. Including this, the release of Promise and Prosperity: The 2016 Aboriginal Business Survey.