**January 24, 2019**

**RE: Statement of Solidarity with Wet’suwet’en**

We, the Department of Sociology at Ryerson University, recognize that we live and work in the area known as Tkaronto, located in the homelands of the Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Huron-Wendat. We acknowledge the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, who we exist with in Treaty on this land. Tkaronto is now home to many Indigenous Peoples, and is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, an agreement between Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg and Hadenosaunee, to peaceably share and steward the Great Lakes region. Living in this territory today, we acknowledge that we hold responsibilities to the peoples (human and non-human), lands, and waters of this region and seek to uphold these treaty relationships.

Central to these relationships is the affirmation of Indigenous Peoples as the true owners of these territories. Indigenous treaties with settler governments did not negate or erase Indigenous sovereignties; rather, they extended *sui generis* Indigenous constitutional orders. It is from this understanding that we lend our voices to the chorus of those in support of the Wet’suwet’en people, their clan governance systems, and hereditary chiefs, while also condemning the actions of the Canadian government for violently interfering on this territory and with the bodies of those defending the land and its people.

The Canadian Government under the leadership of Justin Trudeau has committed to an ongoing process of restoring relationships with Indigenous peoples, promising Truth and Reconciliation, as well as fulfilling its obligations under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). UNDRIP expressly condemns forced removal in Article 10: “Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories.” As such, we call for the immediate withdrawal of the RCMP from Wet’suwet’en territory, and support the right of the Wet’suwet’en people to continue in their actions to protect the lands, waters, and futures of their people. We also call on other academic departments and institutions across Turtle Island to join in condemning this state violence against Indigenous nations. And, finally, we gratefully acknowledge York University's School of Social Work for their letter of solidarity from which ours is adapted.

In solidarity,

Department of Sociology
Faculty of Arts, Ryerson University