

February 17, 2020

Statement of Solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en

We, the executive committee of the Women and Gender Studies Institute Graduate Students Union at the University of Toronto, recognize that we study and live on the traditional lands of the Huron-Wendat, Anishinabek Nation, and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy under the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant. We share in the responsibility to honour this treaty and live peaceably with the peoples, land and waters of the Great Lakes region.

As graduate students in Women and Gender Studies, we critically examine the entanglements of gender, race and sexuality. Through a feminist lens, we seek to address how borders, colonialisms, labour, and migration shape life, knowledge and politics. We see the persistence of white settler colonial violence in Canada. We recognize the ongoing and conscious neglect to address the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, trans and 2 spirited people.

We stand in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en People as they courageously protect their unceded lands from the RCMP, the Trudeau and Horgan Governments. We recognize the sovereign authority of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs as the only power to sanction development on the Wet'suwet'en Yin'tah (traditional territories). We call on the RCMP, the Trudeau and Horgan Governments to stand down and honour the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) which clearly states in Article 10 that "Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories." We condemn the development of the Coastal GasLink pipelines without the explicit consent of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs and people.

We call on our fellow scholars and associations to join us in signing this Pledge to Stand with Unist'ot'en: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdNtxbSahBWHsa9WY_sEelq8BAEp1mOsiiOzkvq9dE7ryMnGA/viewform

This is a time for raising awareness as the trains, highways, and streets are brought to a standstill. We encourage our community of graduate students and scholars to intensify this momentum by writing, speaking, and teaching to promote anticolonialism and decolonization in solidarity with Unist'ot'en <http://unistoten.camp/>.

In solidarity,

Binta Bajaha
Lauren Duperron
Esra Kazanbas
Erica Marrison
Darlyne Bautista