



## **For Immediate Release**

February 14, 2023

### **Northern Chiefs respond to unidentified object shot down over Traditional Territories**

On Saturday February 11, Prime Minister Trudeau confirmed that the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) shot down an unidentified high-altitude object over the traditional territories of the North Yukon First Nations on his orders. It has since been confirmed that the Canadian forces will lead the recovery of the object.

The Northern Chiefs of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation acknowledge the discussions had with the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon on this matter over the last few days, in particular conversations with Defence Minister Anita Anand, Northern Affairs Minister Dan Vandal and Premier Ranj Pillai. However, the Northern Chiefs will continue to call for a collaborative process to be formalized for any matters of Arctic Sovereignty and Security to ensure that our concerns are represented and our citizens are informed.

The Northern Chiefs are asking their citizens to stay clear of the area and the object wreckage noting that it is critical that the object is recovered and analyzed by officials. The Northern Chiefs will continue to discuss the matter with the governments of Yukon and Canada. It is imperative that North Yukon First Nations are consulted in all matters that affect our people, lands, waters, and skies.

## **QUOTES**

“As Arctic security and sovereignty remain an ongoing situation that requires our careful attention and involvement, we appreciate that our requests for inclusion have been heard.”

“The Northern First Nations communities continue to request to be included in security matters that directly affect our lands, people, oceans, and airspace.” - **Chief Joseph, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in**

“The challenges of Arctic sovereignty and security is not new to our communities; to our Nations. However, with mounting pressures of international conflict and unrest and of a changing climate, the need for inclusion and transparency around security issues is heightened and it is critical that our voices are at the table. We ask all governments to recognize the key role First Nations in the Northern Yukon play in Arctic sovereignty and security.” - **Chief Frost, Vuntut Gwitchin Government**

## **CONTACTS**

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