

Statement from the Executive of the Black Canadian Studies Association in support of Wet'suwet'en land defenders and all who are in the fight against Indigenous dispossession, anti-Black racism and other forms of colonialism

March 3, 2022

This statement is a call to our fellow member associations, the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and administrators and faculty within postsecondary institutions.

Reaffirming our [2020 statement](#), the BCSA Executive feels strongly that scholars, academic associations, and postsecondary institutions have a responsibility to stand in solidarity with land defenders, such as the [Wet'suwet'en](#) who are working to assert Indigenous sovereignty and custodial relationships to their territories, as well as a responsibility to support all who are in the fight against colonialism.

For Black and Indigenous peoples, protest and other refusals are practices of care, enactments of autonomy, and instantiations of solidarity, extending across many generations. These forms of political engagement are precious, long-standing traditions. However, they are also perilous, due to the state and state-condoned policing that everyday refusals seek to counter. By our mere existence, Black and Indigenous peoples are faced with deadly force, such as the recent killing of [Latjor Tuel](#). As well, we/they are faced with administrative violence across all Canadian institutions. Indigenous land defenders, in particular, face the administrative violence of territorial dispossession concerning their lands, including through the use of [injunctios](#) coupled with criminal sanction and forcible removal. At the same time, applications by Indigenous peoples for injunctios to uphold their inherent jurisdiction and constitutional rights [are infrequently granted](#) to the benefit of extractive and infrastructure companies. Because of our critical teaching, mobilizing and calling out racism, Black and Indigenous scholars, students, and community members thus face daily, often long-term aggressions. In this context, we understand that violence against Black and Indigenous peoples includes countless Canadian extractive industries operating on and beyond Turtle Island.

Statements can be a form of allyship. Once again, we encourage our fellow scholars and associations to join us in signing this [Pledge to Stand with Unist'ot'en](#). **Also, on March 21-23, 2022, you will have the opportunity to support the Scholars Strike Canada**, which will devote two days of teach-ins and one day of action to '[Defund, Demilitarize and Abolish Police, Prisons and All Forms of Carcerality](#)'. This is an opportunity to stand firmly in solidarity with Black and Indigenous persons who have no choice but to protest criminalization, including Indigenous peoples as they defend themselves and their land from colonial-capitalist violence. We encourage you to follow updates and get involved in other ways, by donating to community groups and joining in protests.

Do consider using critical resources, such as the Yellowhead Institute's papers on [Land Back](#) and [Cash Back](#), to inform your teaching and scholarship. We stress once again that in addition to

showing public solidarity, faculty members, academic associations, and postsecondary institutions must turn inward to challenge our own hierarchical, neoliberal colonial ways of doing. It is only through reflection and sustained anti-colonial praxis that we can truly provide space for counter-hegemonic living.

In solidarity,

BCSA Executive