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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner is granted intervenor status in cases that will test B.C.'s *Declaration Act* in court for the first time

Vancouver B.C. – B.C.'s Supreme Court has granted B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner leave to intervene in two cases—*Gitxaala Nation v. Chief Gold Commissioner of B.C. et al.* and *Ehattlesaht First Nation v. His Majesty the King in right of B.C. et al.*—that will mark the first legal tests of B.C.'s *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA or the *Declaration Act*) since it became law in 2019. The *Declaration Act* plays an important role in decolonization and reconciliation efforts in the province.

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“The cases brought by Gitxaala and Ehattlesaht First Nations against British Columbia have the potential to set an important precedent about the legal effect of DRIPA,” said Kasari Govender, B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner.

“I am looking forward to assisting the court by providing legal submissions about how to interpret and apply this legislation as a human rights statute that affirms the application of UNDRIP to the laws of British Columbia,” she concluded.

For more information about the cases and the Commissioner's application to intervene filed in December 2022, please view the following resources:

- [B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner applies for intervenor status in cases that could set important precedent for the interpretation of B.C.'s Declaration Act](#)
- [Gitxaala Nation and Ehattlesaht First Nation challenge B.C. mineral tenure regime](#)

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Media contact

To request an interview with Commissioner Kasari Govender, please contact Charlotte Kingston, Director, Communications, at media@bchumanrights.ca or 1-250-216-4534.

Media kit

[Download](#) our media kit for images of Commissioner Kasari Govender.

About BCOHRC

BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner exists to address the root causes of inequality, discrimination and injustice in B.C. by shifting laws, policies, practices and cultures. We do this work through education, research, advocacy, inquiry and monitoring. Learn more at: bchumanrights.ca

About the Commissioner

B.C.'s Human Rights Commissioner, Kasari Govender, started her five-year term on Sept. 3, 2019. Since then, our Office has been working swiftly to build a strong team, to listen deeply to the concerns of British Columbians, to deliver education materials on our rights and responsibilities, to issue policy guidance to protect marginalized communities and to lay a human rights-based foundation for our work. As an independent officer of the Legislature, the Commissioner is uniquely positioned to ensure human rights in B.C. are protected, respected and advanced on a systemic level throughout our society.

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