

already demonstrated positive examples in areas such as revenue sharing, skills training, and business development for Aboriginal communities. Now corporations and governments need to build on these successes to keep up with the rapid pace of development, moving beyond superficial consultations toward genuine engagement. Aboriginal communities must also play a leadership role to help forge these relationships, to develop local and adaptive solutions that will be essential to success.²⁷⁶

In November 2013, after eight months of consultations with representatives from Aboriginal communities, industry, and local and provincial governments in British Columbia and Alberta, Douglas Eyford, Canada's special representative on west-coast energy infrastructure, issued his report to the prime minister. "Forging Partnerships, Building Relationships: Aboriginal Canadians and Energy Development" focused on Aboriginal-Crown relations in the context of proposed energy infrastructure projects in British Columbia. He noted that although there are many differences among Aboriginal representatives, there was general consensus that development projects must respect constitutionally protected Aboriginal rights, involve Aboriginal communities in decision making and project planning, and mitigate environmental risks.²⁷⁷ Eyford made recommendations for taking action in three key areas: building trust, fostering inclusion, and advancing reconciliation. He noted in particular that "Aboriginal communities view natural resource development as linked to a broader reconciliation agenda."²⁷⁸ This is consistent with the Commission's view that meaningful reconciliation cannot be limited to the residential school legacy, but must become the ongoing framework for resolving conflicts and building constructive partnerships with Aboriginal peoples.

In December 2013, a group of current and former high-profile leaders from Aboriginal communities, business, banking, environment organizations, and federal and provincial governments released a report, "Responsible Energy Development in Canada," summarizing the results of a year-long dialogue. They concluded that Canada is facing an "energy resource development gridlock." In their view, the potential economic and social benefits derived from the exploitation of Canada's rich natural resources must be weighed against the potential risks to Aboriginal communities and their traditional territories, and must also address broader environmental concerns associated with global warming.²⁷⁹ They emphasized that there are significant barriers to reconciliation, including conflicting values, lack of trust, and differing views on how the benefits of resource development should be distributed and adverse effects be mitigated.²⁸⁰ The report identified four principles for moving forward on responsible energy resource development: (1) forging and nurturing constructive relationships, (2) reducing cumulative social and environmental impacts, (3) ensuring the continuity of cultures and traditions, and (4) sharing the benefits fairly.²⁸¹

Writing about the 2014 Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia*, Kenneth Coates, Canada Research Chair in Regional Innovation at the University of Saskatchewan, and Dwight Newman, law professor and Canada Research