A Vision Moving Forward

First Nations across Canada are achieving results by being focused and strategic. We continue to move forward based on a shared vision that affirms and advances First Nation rights in ways that will improve the quality of life and strengthen First Nation citizens, communities and governments.

We provide this update on key issues for your information. Please note that AFN continues to build on its dialogue with all First Nations across Canada using all available tools and avenues including direct communications, regular communiqués, listservs, and social media. There is much more information that is constantly being updated at www.afn.ca.

The AFN continues to take all opportunities to further First Nation interests. The role at the national level is to create the space for First Nations to drive solutions based on their rights and responsibilities.

On January 23, 2012, over 800 First Nation Chiefs, youth and Elders assembled in Ottawa, Ontario for the Crown-First Nation Gathering planning and preparation. The Crown-First Nation Gathering was an important opportunity for First Nations to engage directly with the Crown, as represented by the Governor General, the Prime Minister, and a number of key federal Cabinet ministers, Senators and senior officials. Hundreds more First Nation leaders participated in the Gathering through 10 videoconferencing sites, and many more watched the live webcast and live television coverage. It was a truly momentous occasion, a chance for all Canadians to see our people, hear our words and better understand our plans to move forward.

In calling for the meeting, our key goal was to honour and reset – or renew – the relationship between First Nations and the Crown. From the earliest days of first contact with the newcomers and through the time of Treaty making, our relationship was founded on the principles of mutual respect, mutual recognition, partnership and sharing. This relationship is codified in the Treaties and our own wampum belts. The imposition of the Indian Act and many other federal laws and policies, such as the tragedy of the residential schools betrayed this relationship. Our people are living the results of failed federal policies and laws that have been imposed on us, resulting in poverty, despair, poor health and poor living conditions.

Our core document for the meeting is the 2012 First Nations Plan: Honouring Our Past, Affirming Our Rights, Seizing Our Future and is publicly available on the AFN website. The focus is on the key themes of:

- The First Nation-Crown Relationship
- New Fiscal Relationships
- Implementation of First Nation Governments
- Structural Change

In addition to the Gathering, the Prime Minister hosted a Regional First Nation roundtable dialogue on Monday, January 23, 2012 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. There was an open and honest exchange on First Nation priorities from designated representatives from every region of the country. This set the stage for Tuesday’s historic gathering.
The Crown-First Nations Gathering

The Crown-First Nations Gathering was convened Tuesday morning. First Nations were represented by a delegation of 170 leaders, Elders and other representatives. The day began with appropriate ceremony and a gift exchange. A drum group from Treaty #3 was present and a smudge was performed by Algonquin Elder Bertha Comnda.

In the Governor General's speech he stated: “My hope is that this gathering will serve as the foundation for a renewed and strengthened relationship between the Crown and First Nations. By going back to first principles, we can work with greater confidence—together—to create a brighter future for our families, our communities and our country.”

There were presentations from the Crown and First Nations representatives on a number of key topics. Speakers included Ministers and former National Chiefs Ovide Mercredi and Matthew Coon Come as well as AFN Regional Chiefs. These presentations were forceful and moving. It was clear that First Nations are driving change and bringing forward innovative ideas for progress and prosperity.

The afternoon featured concurrent sessions with the Crown, represented by thirteen Ministers and others including Senators and Members of Parliament, and First Nations leaders focusing on:

- Strengthening the Relationship and Enabling Opportunities
- Unlocking the Potential of First Nation Economies
- Realizing the Promise of First Nations Peoples (education, health, safe and secure communities, etc.)

An Outcome Statement issued following the Crown-First Nations Gathering commits to key principles and sets out immediate steps for action. Importantly, the Statement recognizes the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the involvement of our Nations in the War of 1812 and the Treaties as the basis of our relationships. It acknowledges that “a series of misguided and harmful government policies...have shaken First Nation confidence in our relationship”. The Statement confirms that it is time to reinvigorate the Crown First Nation relationship on the original basis building on the Apology and the endorsement of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The statement includes work to strengthen First Nation governance and move beyond the control of the Indian Act; renewing the relationship and improving First Nation financial arrangements; implementing Treaties and Treaty rights; advancing resolution of First Nation land claims on the basis of recognition and affirmation of First Nation rights; implementing mutually agreed upon recommendations on First Nations education; and, a specific task force to advance recommendations to unlock First Nation economies.

The statement concludes with the Crown and First Nations committing to maintaining open dialogue, monitoring progress and working together to report on outcomes within one year.

Specific, immediate next steps for the action are outlined as follows:

1. **Financial Arrangements Working Group** to be established between First Nations and relevant departments to review the structure of financial arrangements between the federal government and First Nations. The task of this group will be to advance single, multi-year Government of Canada financial arrangements for First Nations; improve accountability for all parties; and ensure financial self-sufficiency of First Nations as the end-goal.

2. Removing Barriers to First Nations Governance: The Government of Canada and First Nations will work to develop solutions to remove barriers that hinder First Nations governance. The Indian Act cannot be replaced overnight, but through the use of existing tools and the development of new mechanisms, both parties can create the conditions to enable sustainable and successful First Nations.
3. The Government of Canada and First Nations commit to respect and honour our treaty relationship and advance approaches to find common ground on Treaty implementation. With regard to comprehensive claims, the statement references a commitment to ensuring federal negotiation policies reflect the principles of recognition and affirmation in advancing certainty, expeditious resolution, and self-sufficiency.

4. **Education Reform:** A commitment to implement agreed upon recommendations as quickly as practicable and establish a process to work constructively through any areas of disagreement.

5. **Economic Task Force:** A joint economic task force to report back, in a timely fashion, with recommendations to further unlock the economic potential of First Nations. The Chiefs Committee on Economic Development has discussed this initiative already and welcomes nominations of potential candidates for this Joint Task Force.

**Parliament**

The Federal Budget was delivered on March 29, 2012 under the theme *Jobs, Growth and Long-term Prosperity*. It contained investments in First Nation education, continued levels of funding for water on reserves, family violence and investments supporting Atlantic and Pacific First Nation commercial fishing. Economic Action Plan 2012 also noted “the recent Crown-First Nations Gathering underscored the Government’s commitment to work with First Nations on shared priorities”, including working on a First Nations Education Act “to establish structures and standards to support strong and accountable education on reserve … and to explore mechanisms to ensure stable, predictable and sustainable funding for First Nations elementary and secondary education.”

Achieving long-term prosperity means implementing the promise of the Treaty relationship and the full partnership it represents for all First Nations. The investments in education are needed and they indicate that the voices of our youth are perhaps beginning to be heard. But we must do more. We will be relentless in our efforts to ensure sustainable and secure funding for education.

Budget 2012 also speaks at length on efforts to streamline major projects approvals and Aboriginal consultation under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. First Nations must be directly involved in the discussion on any changes or new approaches to environmental protection. First Nations call upon Canada to uphold the standard of Free, Prior and Informed Consent as articulated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

AFN maintains continued focus the clear and consistent priorities First Nations have expressed through resolutions: asserting our rights and affirming our responsibilities, advancing the National Treaty strategy, education, health and community safety and security including safe drinking water.

Please watch [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca) for additional information and analysis as it becomes available.

**Legislation of Interest to First Nations**

**Bill C-10: Safe Streets and Communities Act,** has completed the Parliamentary process and received Royal Assent on March 13, 2012. Bill C-10 is omnibus legislation that combines 9 bills from the previous parliament and includes changes to the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and the requirement of mandatory minimum sentences for drug offences. First Nations have expressed numerous concerns with an approach that uses expensive and punitive jail measures as this disproportionally impacts First Nation citizens as they are already overrepresented in the corrections system, and will not address underlying issues that lead to involvement with the justice system. AFN articulated concerns in a letter and written submission to the Minister of Justice and National Chief Atleo presented to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. Advocacy will continue on the need to prevent additional harm through the implementation of this legislation, as well as to reform how First Nations are treated by the justice system writ large, including asserting and implementing First Nation jurisdiction over all justice matters.
**Bill C-27: First Nations Financial Transparency Act** was introduced on November 23, 2011. This legislation is an elaboration of Private Members Bill C-575 which was introduced in the previous parliament. The Act would require First Nations to prepare and publicly disclose audited consolidated financial statements and schedules for remuneration paid to Chiefs and councillors. This information would also be provided on the AANDC website. Failure to prepare or disclose such information could result in withholding of contribution funds or termination of an agreement.

Chiefs have affirmed the importance of accountability and transparency to their citizens and this Bill will not address the real issues that challenge First Nation governments. Instead it will impose punitive remedies that entrench the current ineffective and inappropriate funding relationship between Canada and First Nations.

AFN will continue working to make sure power is returned to our people and that the fundamental accountability relationship is between First Nation governments and their citizens. Further, AFN will continue pursuing new systems of fiscal transfers that reflect the Nation-to-Nation relationship and truly support First Nation governments.

**Bill S-2: Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act**, was introduced in the Senate on September 28, 2011 and has passed all stages in the Senate and was introduced in the House of Commons on December 8, 2011. First Nations will be familiar with previous versions of this bill, which have been introduced on three occasions. This legislation contains some changes to the previous bill – notably removal of the verification officer and office, removal of the double majority threshold for ratification, extension of the time for which an “exclusive occupancy order” can be granted, and the addition of a 12 month transition period before the Bill’s application to First Nations.

It remains that Matrimonial Real Property and land management is a matter of First Nation jurisdiction and First Nations have repeatedly called on the government to work with us on an approach that will truly ensure First Nation citizens’ access to justice. This Bill will not provide the necessary tools and capacity to access justice or to address underlying issues, such as housing shortages, family violence and the need for community-based dispute resolution mechanisms. There are already First Nations that have put their own laws and approaches in place on this matter. These must be respected and a similar approach must be supported for all First Nations.

First Nations will want to consider ways to advance and occupy their jurisdiction in this matter. Such action may provide important protection ensuring that the federal provisional rules do not ever apply or contravene First Nation jurisdiction. To support First Nations, the AFN has produced a Matrimonial Property Law Resource Handbook which contains a sample First Nations Matrimonial Property Law. This law is based on inherent First Nation jurisdiction and is meant as a resource for First Nations beginning or currently in the process of codifying their approach to Matrimonial Real Property. This Handbook and other resources are available on www.afn.ca.

**Bill S-6: First Nations Elections Act** was introduced in the Senate on December 6, 2011, and is currently at 3rd reading in the Senate. This Bill would create opt-in legislation for First Nations to extend the election term from two to four years; create a mechanism to re-call elected officials, establish a process to initiate election challenges in court (as opposed to bringing them to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs) and set-out offences and penalties in relation to the election of a chief or councillor. This legislation results from initiatives of the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nation Chiefs and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs to improve the system of elections conducted under the Indian Act.

Concerns were presented during committee review that the Act will expand the powers of the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development to be able to order a First Nation under this Act without their consent, in the event of a “protracted leadership dispute”. BCAFN Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould appeared before the committee and recommended that this provision be struck from the Bill, however, it was approved without amendments.

**Bill S-8: Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act** was introduced in the Senate on February 29, 2012. Some changes have been made from the previous iteration of this Bill (S-11), including a commitment in the preamble for First Nation input into the development of regulations and the inclusion of a non-abrogation/derogation clause and an explicit
limitation that the bill does not authorize regulations respecting the allocation of water supplies or issues of permits for the use of water for any purpose other than as drinking water.

Qualified support has been expressed for these changes and the Bill in its current form by Alberta and some Atlantic First Nations. However, consensus remains that investments are required for capacity to comply and full First Nation involvement must occur in the development of associated regulations. In addition, potential impacts of this legislation on First Nation jurisdiction will need to be clarified.

Council of the Federation
AFN has been working with Provincial Premiers and Territorial leaders through their Council of the Federation for a number of years now. While First Nations have a direct political, legal and historical relationship with the federal government, the premiers and territorial leaders are important in supporting and pressing for action on our key priorities. We have been successful in establishing an Aboriginal Affairs Working Group to ensure work continues beyond and between Council of the Federation meetings as well as meetings with the Council of Ministers of Education Canada.

At the meeting on July 20, 2011, AFN set out First Nation priorities and related recommendations on First Nation education, First Nation economic development, ending violence against Aboriginal women and girls and improving crisis and emergency response management between all jurisdictions.

Based on these efforts, a number of specific initiatives are unfolding in collaboration with the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group. These include a pilot project focused on the development and implementation of a First Nations education “toolkit”. AFN is also working to develop a Virtual Resource Centre on Energy and Mining based on the high level of interest that this concept received at the Indigenous Summit on Energy and Mining last June and as mandated by Chiefs-in-Assembly at the July 2011 AGA. The current focus is on the development of a business plan that will help to identify financing for this venture.

The next meeting of the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group will take place in Toronto on April 10 – 11, 2012 and all jurisdictions will provide updates on their progress in the identified priority areas.

Exercising and Implementing Our Rights

First Nations across Canada are moving forward based on a clear set of priorities focused on First Nation rights and Treaties. Key developments will help guide our work.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
• The Government of Canada endorsed the UNDRIP on November 12, 2010. In recognizing the UN Declaration, Canada is recognizing the human and fundamental rights and freedoms of First Nation peoples.
• With the endorsement of the UN Declaration, our real work together begins. The UN Declaration commits Canada to working with us to give life to our rights by working with First Nations in partnership and respect.
• The National Chief presented a Statement on implementation requirements for moving forward on May 18, 2011 to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in New York. Specific recommendations included that all States, in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, should develop national plans of work to implement the Declaration with clear timelines and priorities and further that all states should review domestic laws and policies to ensure compliance with the Declaration.
• AFN will participate in the upcoming UNPFII in May 2012.
• The AFN hosted a webinar on August 8, 2011, with representatives from Amnesty International, Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers) and the Grand Council of the Crees to provide information and answer questions on the UN Declaration and its application. An archive of this webinar can be found at www.afn.ca along with additional background information.
National Strategy on Treaties

• The National Strategy on Treaties is guided by our resolution Sacred Treaties, Sacred Trust: Working Together for Treaty Implementation and Advancing our Sovereignty as Nations adopted by the Chiefs-in-Assembly in 2010 in Winnipeg.

• The AFN is not a Treaty rights holder. Rather, the AFN is working to facilitate and support the views of Treaty holders from all Treaty regions to further engagement with the Crown.

• First Nations Leaders have affirmed a path to move forward based on the original Treaty relationship, our rights and building and strengthening our governments. First Nations recognize that the colonial Indian Act is completely inconsistent with this approach.

• The AFN recognizes and fully supports the Spirit and Intent of the Treaties, and continues to stress that appropriate ceremonies and protocols must always be conducted when Treaties are discussed. There is a third party to Treaty and that is the Creator. Therefore, as part of the work leading up to the Crown-First Nations Gathering, discussions and ceremonies were held with First Nation Elders and traditional leaders to ensure that proper protocols were followed.

• Treaty relationship and implementation issues formed a significant part of the First Nation-Crown Gathering discussions held in Ottawa in January 2012. Furthermore, as part of the Crown - First Nations Gathering Outcome Statement, the Government of Canada and First Nations agreed to commit to respect and honour the Treaty relationship and advance approaches to find common ground on Treaty implementation as a joint priority.

• The Special Chiefs Assembly in December 2011 provided a forum for a discussion with First Nations Treaty leaders regarding progress made to date on the National Strategy on Treaty Implementation.

• At the Special Chiefs Assembly, a draft of the First Nations Treaty Parties Statement Regarding the Observance and Enforcement of Treaties was presented to First Nations Treaty leaders for discussion moving forward. A number of revisions have been made. This statement was also presented at the First Nation-Crown Gathering in January 2012 and will continue to be advanced through ongoing meetings with Treaty leaders and experts.

• The intention of this Statement is to support the engagement of Treaty Nations and the Crown towards establishing treaty processes in order to clarify the treaty relationship and/or implement treaty rights – and, where the parties agree, to rectify the terms of the treaties, and participate in good faith in such a process.

• In September 2011, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) participated and hosted a roundtable with Numbered Treaty Nations as part of the Treaty #1-11 Gathering hosted by TsuuT’ina Nation in Treaty #7 territory. This is significant as it provided an opportunity for the AFN and the Numbered Treaty Movement to have a discussion on how to strengthen its relationship together, focus on common priorities, and support the work of each other.

• The AFN hosted a roundtable with Pre-Confederation Treaty Nations in March 2011. The essential focus of the roundtable was on First Nations - Crown engagement, and included a discussion on historic efforts at Treaty implementation, the role of dispute resolution as a mechanism for Treaty implementation, a discussion on the UNDRIP, discussions to better understand local and regional perspectives on the Treaty relationship, a dialogue on Treaty Commissions and exploratory tables, and future efforts to move forward in partnership with the Crown.

• The AFN has begun research to consider options such as the establishment of an impartial tribunal or Independent Treaty commissioner, in order to adjudicate conflicts that arise with respect to the implementation of Treaties, particularly given that independent dispute resolution is emerging as a central element in Treaty implementation discussions.

• As part of the strategy, the AFN has established the First Nations Rights Fund to build resources to support the pursuit of alternative remedies where it is considered strategic to use legal action in aid of political action. Fundraising efforts are underway.

• AFN supports efforts at education for First Nations youth, as well as the education of all Canadians on the true history of the original Treaty relationship.

• A roundtable with all Treaty Nations is being planned for April 26 – 27, 2012.
Supporting First Nation Families and Communities

Justice and Community Safety

- AFN hosted a National Justice Forum, February 21 – 23, 2012 in Vancouver BC. The Forum brought together over 600 participants, including leadership, citizens, community justice workers, activists, and Elders along with federal and provincial policy makers, and police representatives to critically discuss the current relationship of First Nations with the justice system.
- Work is underway following the Forum to develop a National First Nation Justice Strategy, to act as a framework to move forward on First Nation justice systems, and guide actions and activities to transform the current treatment and outcomes for First Nations by justice systems.
- Materials from the Forum are available on www.afn.ca.
- We continue our efforts to support the calls for attention to the urgent issue of murdered and missing Indigenous women throughout Canada and a national action plan to end violence against women. At the AFN SCA in December 2010, First Nation leaders called for real action to address the high number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and to ensure supports are available to communities so all of our citizens can live in safety. At the July 2011 AGA, Chiefs passed a resolution calling for a Royal Commission on Violence Against Indigenous Girls and Women – a call that was echoed at the National Justice Forum.
- AFN sought and received standing as part of the British Columbia Missing Women Commission of Inquiry in early May, 2011. However AFN lost confidence that the Inquiry will achieve its goals due to the imbalance and inequity in legal resources available to the affected families as well as interested women’s and indigenous organizations. We continue to advocate for the root causes of violence to be addressed, and to support the families that have lost love ones.
- In June 2011, National Chief Atleo attended the National Aboriginal Women's Forum in Vancouver where he continued the call for adequate support for families and prevention measures to end violence against Indigenous women across Canada.
- AFN also participated in the Expert meeting on Violence Against Indigenous Women as per article 22 of UNDRIP on January 18-22, 2012 in New York, USA to continue to advocate to end violence against Indigenous girls and women.
- Based on the Expert Group meeting, the UN has developed a number of recommendations for state governments, communities, and Indigenous peoples to implement to end violence against Indigenous women and girls.

Education

- The Call to Action on First Nations Education continues to gain momentum, with a variety of activities and events highlighting and reinforcing the need for concrete action to reform First Nations education.

National Panel on First Nations Education

- In response to our advocacy, the Government of Canada agreed to work with AFN and First Nations on the priority of education late in the year 2010. The National Panel on First Nation education was launched in June 2011.
- The National Panel was an independent body which led a national engagement effort inviting participation through eight regional roundtables, a national roundtable, visits to First Nation schools, key meetings with First Nations educators, leadership, provincial and federal officials, and corporations, and written submissions.
- The National Panel activities wrapped up in November, 2011, and a report by the AFN Special Rapporteur in December outlined key themes that emerged from this process. They included:

  **Jurisdiction:** First Nations inherent right to education must be protected and respected. First Nations control over First Nations education means education programming that is designed by First Nations for First Nations. Canada has an inherent and fiduciary responsibility to First Nations.
**Funding:** A secure and updated fiscal framework is required for the funding of First Nations education. Secure, stable and predictable funding is required to make First Nations education more effective. Statutory funding arrangements are also required based on real costs, indexation and appropriate treatment of the diverse characteristics of First Nations across Canada.

**Curriculum Development and Language and Culture:** Consistent with the Residential School Apology Canada has a legal and moral obligation to provide adequate resources for language and culture especially in a First Nations education context. Language and culture are critical to First Nations identity and nation building. First Nation languages must be restored, revitalized, preserved and promoted. Language and culture represent every facet of First Nation life and are the cornerstones of any successful education strategy as represented by input from Elders, wisdom keepers, parents, local communities and key First Nation stakeholders.

**System accountability:** First Nations education must be supported through professional and accountable institutional supports delivering second and third level supports. Clear accountability guidelines must be put in place to protect First Nations education resources. The provincial system is inadequate in terms of accountability for tuition paid for First Nation students. Money needs to follow the student.

**Community and social supports:** Support and partnership is required to create healthy and holistic learning environments that link with organizations that can support the mental, physical, emotional and social well-being requirements of First Nation children, particularly as they are impacted by poverty and lack of infrastructure. There must be adequate resourcing for interventions that are designed for implementation by First Nations for First Nations.

**Quality:** Quality of First Nations education is based on traditional values which retain and incorporate the principles of wholeness, order, balance and respect for the natural world. Quality education encompasses parental engagement, clearly written policies and standards, quality curriculum, long term planning and evaluation and equitable and predictable funding to ensure student success.

- The AFN is mandated to support First Nations control of First Nation education, including advocating for a statutory guarantee of funding to ensure equity and fairness and ultimately enable the success of First Nation learners. There is no such guarantee in the existing legislative and policy frameworks which have been in place since 1951, during the era of residential schools. The AFN fully respects all other approaches and avenues being pursued by First Nations to support First Nations control of First Nation education.
- The National Panel provided its report on February 8, 2012 to both First Nations and the Government of Canada, the Chiefs Committee on Education and National Indian Education Council.
- The National Panel report concluded that there are three principles required for reform: child-centred; reconciliation; and shared accountability
- The report of the Panel, along with the many other reports and direction received must lead to concrete action in full partnership with First Nations, and we must hold the federal government to account as we move forward.
- AFN organized a webcast on February 15, 2012 to inform First Nations of the recommendations of the Panel and to get initial observations from First Nations.
- Commitments in the 2012 Budget show forward momentum on actions, but more needs to happen.
- The implementation of our inherent and Treaty rights through this process is critical to ensuring the success of our students. The well-being of our children and their futures remain the focus, with Education as the key to unlocking the full potential of First Nation citizens. We will not lose another generation.
Other reports:

Reforming First Nations Education: From Crisis to Hope:
- The Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples conducted a study on First Nations education with a focus on tripartite agreements, governance and delivery structures, and legislative frameworks. The Committee issued its report on December 7, 2011, and offered the following recommendations:

  Recommendation 1 – First Nations Education Act
  That the government of Canada, in consultation with First Nations and First Nations educational authorities, develop a First Nations Education Act (FNEA); That the FNEA recognizes First Nations authority over elementary and secondary education on-reserve; That the FNEA enable the establishment of First Nations controlled second and third level education structures; That the application of this act to individual First Nations be optional, and provide for the repeal of the education sections of the Indian Act for those First Nations that opt into the new act.

  Recommendation 2 – Funding Mechanism
  That the proposed FNEA provide statutory authority to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) to make payments from the consolidated revenue fund to First Nations Educational Authorities, with the objective of providing educational services on reserves; That the methodology for establishing the amount of these payments be enshrined in regulations authorized under the FNEA, and developed in consultation with First Nations; That these regulations would consider key cost drivers such as demographics and remoteness; and that the formula for establishing payments include, among other things, First Nations language preservation and revitalization programs.

  Recommendation 3 – Canada-First Nations Action Plan
  That AANDC, in collaboration with First Nations organizations and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), take immediate steps to develop a Canada-First Nations Action Plan for education reform; That the joint action plan include a process to ensure that First Nations are able to opt into an FNEA within agreed-upon timelines.

  Recommendation 4 – Action Plan Follow-up
  That a task force, jointly appointed by the Minister of AANDC and AFN, be established to oversee and monitor progress related to First Nations educational reform; That the task force report annually, for the next five years, to the Minister of AANDC and to the National Chief of the AFN.

- This report was released as a parallel report for the National Panel and identifies specific actions that are necessary to improve educational outcomes and services intended for First Nations youth. It reinforces the notion that First Nations Control of First Nations Education must remain the number one reference for advancing First Nations education reform and stresses that “Canada must provide adequate funding to First Nations educational systems to secure and protect First Nations individuals’ right to quality education.”
- Further, the report underscores that federal and provincial governments must understand and respect the legal rights of First Nations, in particular their inherent and treaty rights.

Virtual Summits
- The AFN organized its third online Virtual Summit on post secondary education December 12, 2011, following two very successful summits held in January and March. First Nations students from across the country participated in a virtual dialogue with National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo. The purpose of the dialogue was to capture the views and perspectives of First Nations students as they contemplate university studies. The event was a joint initiative of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations and was hosted at Mount Saint Vincent University located in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
Shannen’s Dream

• A second report to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Periodic Review of Canada was prepared with Kairos and released October 24, 2011, and a report for the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) is also being prepared.

• On February 6, 2012 6 youth ambassadors went to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland to speak with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. In the spirit of Shannen Koostachin and the Our Dreams Matter Too report, the youth ambassadors attended the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to request that the UN look into the inequities for First Nations children and families for education, health and child welfare. The youth ambassadors presented the issues using their personal experiences and how they have been affected by the inequities.

• The “Have a Heart for First Nations Children” Campaign encouraged Canadians to send letters and valentines to the Prime Minister to express support for First Nations children. Schools across the country were involved in a series of events to raise awareness, which culminated in a rally on February 14, 2012 on Parliament Hill where students read aloud their letters to persuade the government to treat First Nations children fairly.

• On February 27, 2012, there was unanimous support in the House of Commons for the following motion: That, in the opinion of the House, the government should adopt Shannen’s Dream by: (a) declaring that all First Nation children have an equal right to high-quality, culturally-relevant education; (b) committing to provide the necessary financial and policy supports for First Nations education systems; (c) providing funding that will put reserve schools on par with non-reserve provincial schools; (d) developing transparent methodologies for school construction, operation, maintenance and replacement; (e) working collaboratively with First Nation leaders to establish equitable norms and formulas for determining class sizes and for the funding of educational resources, staff salaries, special education services and indigenous language instruction; and (f) implementing policies to make the First Nation education system, at a minimum, of equal quality to provincial school systems.

• This support adds to the growing momentum and awareness of the importance of First Nations education.

• On June 11, 2012, a million person march is planned to convene on Parliament Hill. The “Our Dreams Matter Too – Walk for Culturally Based Equity for First Nations Children” continues to promote the message for the need to ensure our children are treated as equal citizens in Canada.

AANDC’s Education Information System (EIS)

• A new national electronic database is currently being developed by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) that will combine all First Nation recipient reports that include education information. First Nations have consistently advanced principles of First Nations Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession of data, and concerns with this system resulted in a resolution being passed at the SCA in December whereby the Chiefs in Assembly directed AFN to inform the Minister of AANDC of the need to institute a formal process of consultation for the EIS and that until such a process is in place, to halt the implementation process of the EIS.

AFN Education Survey

• The AFN Education Department is conducting a short survey to establish a database of all First Nations Education Directors, Principals of First Nations Schools, and to provide updated information on language programs and education capital needs. This survey is well under way and results should be available shortly.

Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC)

• There were eight recommendations from the CMEC Summit on Aboriginal Education held in February, 2009. AFN has advocated a number of key principles in regular meetings with CMEC officials and is providing feedback on CMEC’s development of a strategic plan for Aboriginal Education. A forum hosted by CMEC in December 2011 highlighted numerous best practices and successes in the field of Aboriginal Education.
Indian Residential Schools & Day Scholar/Day School

- The Common Experience Payment (CEP) deadline was September 19, 2011. A CEP surplus is anticipated. Under the terms of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), once the CEP credits are paid, if the balance of the CEP Designated Amount Fund is more than $40 million, all eligible CEP recipients may apply to receive Personal Credits for education purposes to a maximum value of $3000 per person (no cash value). The Personal Credits are only redeemable for personal or group education services provided by education entities or groups pursuant to terms and conditions being developed by AFN and Canada. Madeline Dion Stout is the AFN representative.

- Under the terms of the IRSSA, following the payment of Personal Credits to all eligible CEP recipients, including administration costs, all excess funds remaining in the Designated Amount Fund on January 1, 2015, will be transferred to the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund (NIBTF) and Inuvialuit Education Fund (IEF) to be used for educational programs under terms and conditions agreed to between Canada, NIBTF and IEF.

- The Independent Assessment Process (IAP) deadline is September 19, 2012. Applications have exceeded expectations. The AFN was successful in a bid to facilitate Aboriginal Assistance Support Workers (form fillers) to assist with this process. The AFN has worked with Regional Chiefs to appoint workers in specific regions where there were gaps in service and low response to IAP applications. Training is completed for the form fillers and they have established work plans to begin assisting former IRS students with IAP applications.

- The AFN continues to provide support to those seeking justice and compensation for Day Scholar/Day School students and will continue to assist in efforts at certification of a class action suit.

- Following former IRS student complaints, Crawford Class Action Services has started an investigation into alleged violations of the IRSSA by a law firm.

- Under the terms of the IRSSA, the courts have a supervisory role in the implementation of the agreement. The purpose of the courts’ ongoing supervision of settlement and judgment awards is three-fold: 1. to protect the interests of absent class members; 2. to ensure the overarching principle that those to whom the settlement is intended to apply are treated fairly and equitably in the distribution of the award; and 3. to ensure the timely and effective distribution of the benefits of the award by the Administrator of the Settlement.

- In addition to the legislative obligation to supervise the distribution of the settlement proceeds, the courts are expressly directly to ensure continued supervision in both the IRSSA Approval Orders and Implementation Orders. A final report will be filed with the courts once completed.

- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has reported that it does not have an adequate budget to complete its mandate and will be discussing this further with the parties to the IRSSA. A final call for Commemoration proposals is underway.

- Health Canada continues to provide health supports to former IRS students and families in the IRSSA. A submission is currently before Cabinet for additional funding for the Resolution Health Support and Cultural Support Worker program as well as professional counseling services. There is no certainty of ongoing funding for 12 residential school treatment programs which currently receive funds through the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

Healthy Families and Communities

- At the July 2011 Annual General Assembly, Chiefs passed Resolution 04-2011 calling for the AFN to make Health a priority. On November 7-9, 2011 the AFN hosted a National Health Forum. Over 780 representatives, including over 300 sponsored Health Directors and designates from every region in Canada came together to share new and innovative First Nation-driven approaches to health and wellness. The overall theme of the forum, Taking Action to Move Forward played host to discussions and presentations on five key issues including: sustainability, governance, jurisdiction, research, and knowledge translation which provided a venue for a national health policy dialogue. The First Nations Health Plan was presented within a dialogue session, and set the stage for the Forum and discussions during the week. A summary bulletin on the forum was distributed at the Special Chiefs Assembly and is available on www.afn.ca.

- In an effort to ensure our voices are heard at the upcoming Health Accord discussions, the AFN Health & Social Secretariat presented to the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology on November 17, 2011. Efforts will also continue under the AFN - Health Canada - Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) Task
Group which is looking at critical issues such as sustainability and jurisdiction, as well as mental health and addictions.

- First Nations are continuing to advance plans for a new way forward – where we are in control of own health resources. The recent signing of the Tri-partite Framework Agreement on First Nations Health Governance in BC is a great example of the vision, the determination and drive for First Nations in BC to begin the journey of changing a flawed health system. The Framework is built on the principles and approaches that will ensure partners work in new collaborative ways to discuss transforming health services to First Nation citizens and communities.

- The First Nations and Inuit Mental Wellness Advisory Committee (MWAC) is comprised of representatives from the AFN, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), federal/provincial/territorial networks, non-governmental and First Nations and Inuit expert mental health and addictions organizations. The AFN has been a key partner of MWAC since its inception in 2005. At the December 2011 meeting of MWAC, the group looked at current and emerging priorities within the mental health and addictions field, showcased promising practices and research that has been conducted around MWAC and identified key actions for success that will help inform and support a comprehensive mental wellness strategy.

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- The AFN Youth Mental Wellness Forum took place on October 4-6, 2011 in Winnipeg, MB. The purpose of the forum was to provide youth with information on mental wellness, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and an opportunity to share their experiences and views on mental wellness in their communities. Overall, the forum was a great success. When asked, participants said that they felt better prepared to recognize youth that were at-risk of suicide.

- The third National Truth and Reconciliation Event took place in Halifax, Nova Scotia on October 26-29, 2011. Cultural ceremonies, truth sharing, educational activities, cultural performances and reconciliation activities took place with opportunities for people to provide their statements in both public and private statement taking areas. The theme of the Atlantic National Event, It's About Love - A National Journey for Healing, Families and Reconciliation was inspired by survivors from across the Atlantic who shared their truths during TRC hearings held throughout the Atlantic leading up to the Halifax National Event. Approximately 130 Resolution Health Support Workers (RHSW), Cultural Support Providers (CSP) and registered therapists were on site to provide health supports to all in attendance. The next Truth and Reconciliation National Event is scheduled to take place in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan from June 21-24, 2012.

- The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease held its 42nd Union World Conference on Lung Health, in Lille, France, October 26-30, 2011. The forum provided the opportunity to showcase and create awareness on the health disparities that afflict First Nations. It also provided an opportunity to network with experts and organizations that can support our efforts in improving First Nations health.

- The AFN- National Experts Committee on Public Health (NECPH) held its first meeting on November 30 and December 1, 2011. Membership of the panel consists of one representative per AFN region, one AFN staff and First Nations National experts in Public Health (currently 6), including Dr. Evan Adams, all of whom have been identified in a collaborative effort from the AFN National First Nations Health Technician Network. The AFN-NECPH will identify Public Health priorities, guide its actions and provide expertise and recommendations to address Public Health issues for First Nations.

- The Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative’s (ADI) Capacity Building and Training National Advisory Committee met in Montreal on October 20-21, 2011 to advise on the development of the Community Diabetes Prevention Worker Competency Framework. The framework will serve as a tool to assist regions and First Nations communities in selecting training programs, drafting job descriptions, raising the profile of Community Diabetes Prevention Workers training and work, and working towards stronger relationships and teamwork with other health providers. The ADI initiative continues to support the training for 300 community diabetes workers. Community diabetes prevention workers act as a focal point for diabetes prevention activities and work in partnership with healthcare professionals and other members of their community. Continuing education has also been supported for health professionals and para-professionals working in communities in areas such as diabetes education, health promotion, foot care, and cultural competency. Regional Multi-Disciplinary Teams provide subject matter expertise to communities in areas including diabetes, nutrition, and physical activity. The First Nations Caucus on Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) met with the NIHB Regional Directors and Health Canada - First Nations Inuit Branch (FNIHB) Headquarters on November 2, 2011 to discuss several priority items. These items included areas
where improvements could be made to improve service delivery and access to benefits, such as the mental health crisis counselling benefit, by ensuring that FNIHB’s NIHB unit and FNIHB’s Community Programs Mental Health Directorate work together to ensure seamless delivery for those requiring extended or longer term mental health counselling and implementing proper program supports for those with addictions. The AFN continues to work with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, the Chiefs of Ontario, and Amnesty International on the child welfare case currently before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

- The judicial review (appeal) of the human rights complaint filed by the Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations was heard February 13-15, 2012 in Federal Court in Ottawa. The complaint, filed in 2007, argues that the Federal Government is discriminating against First Nations children by failing to provide equitable and culturally based services on-reserve. The complaint was dismissed by the Human Rights Tribunal in March 2011 on a legal technicality.
- The Caring Society, Assembly of First Nations, and Canadian Human Rights Commission appealed that decision in Federal Court. We anticipate a decision in Spring 2012.

**Supporting First Nation Governments and Nation Re-Building**

- We continue to pursue a broad vision endorsed by Chiefs in Assembly that includes advocacy and research to support First Nation governments to implement their jurisdiction in a manner and pace that they choose.
- AFN hosted important Planning and Dialogue Forums (PDF) in November 2010 in Montreal and on March 7 & 8, 2011 in Vancouver to continue dialogue on a broad national work plan advancing capacity for First Nation governments and Nation Building. The theme of the March PDF was *Strengthening our Nations: Advancing Capacity for First Nation Governments and Economies*, and included focus on moving beyond the Indian Act, exploring resource revenue sharing, alternative financing options, housing and sustainable community design, citizenship, accountability, and strategies for safe, healthy and secure communities.
- We are hearing a clear message from First Nation leaders that we are taking responsibility and we are leading the way. In response to this message, the National Chief tabled a paper at the 2011 Annual General Assembly in Moncton: “*Pursuing First Nation Self-Determination – Realizing our Rights and Responsibilities*”. Resolution 23-2011 directs the creation of a Joint Committee of Chiefs and Experts to further refine priorities, actions and strategies contained in this draft paper, firmly grounding these in principles of the UNDRIP and previous work of Chiefs-in-Assembly. Initial preparations in advance of forming this committee are underway.
- In addition, the agreed to outcomes from the Crown-First Nations Gathering support a concerted look at the barriers to our governments achieving their full potential and together work to create the conditions to enable sustainable and successful First Nations.
- AFN continues to facilitate the sharing of information, experiences and challenges to assist First Nations to chart their paths forward by learning from practical experience of the many communities demonstrating and strengthening self-governing capacity.
- Over the past year, as mandated by Chiefs-in-Assembly, AFN has facilitated an inclusive national dialogue on First Nation citizenship, bringing together diverse and varied voices through newer technologies and by incorporating traditional storytelling and the visions of indigenous artists.
- AFN has coordinated two virtual roundtables to seek views and insights for the path forward and convened a National Forum on First Nation Citizenship on November 15 & 16, 2011 at the Enoch River Cree Resort. The Forum focused on sharing information and provided a wide range of tools for engaging in dialogue and furthering implementation of First Nation jurisdiction over Citizenship, including new fiscal mechanisms, planning, developing laws and the role of parliament in supporting First Nations.
- The national dialogue and regional recommendations were discussed as part of a strategy session at the December 2011 Special Chiefs Assembly.
- AFN will continue advocating and pursuing options to support First Nations implementing their full jurisdiction in this area. More information and resources are available on our Webportal: [www.firstnationcitizenship.afn.ca](http://www.firstnationcitizenship.afn.ca).
- Re-building of our nations must include all of our citizens. Resolution 18-2010 calls for the development of a locally-led, regionally-coordinated, and nationally-facilitated First Nations Urban Strategy. On February 23, 2011, the AFN
hosted a policy roundtable as part of the Fostering Biimaadiziwin – National Research Conference on Urban Aboriginal Peoples. We will continue dialogue on how to better represent the interests of urban First Nation citizens and advocate for the portability of our inherent and treaty rights.

Comprehensive Claims Policy Reform

- Further to the Resolution 71-2011 on the Comprehensive Claims Policy Reform Initiative, a position was developed and delivered by the Comprehensive Claims Policy Working Group (CCPWG) at the Crown-First Nations Gathering.
- In follow-up to the Gathering, work is underway to reflect the commitments to “recognition and affirmation” from the Outcome Statement issued by the Prime Minister as part of the Gathering.
- AFN will continue to engage the CCPWG to develop a workplan that could be advanced jointly with Canada to reform this outdated and ineffective policy, and to continue to develop and pursue the implementation of national, international and regional strategies to promote reform to the federal Comprehensive Claims Policy.

Specific Claims

- It has now been almost 5 years since Canada released its Justice at Last Action Plan to address problems with its Specific Claims process based on four pillars: impartiality and fairness; greater transparency; faster processing; and better access to mediation.
- The Specific Claims Tribunal officially opened its doors in June 2011 and now has at least a dozen claims filed with it. The Tribunal is an independent body that adjudicates specific claims up to $150M where a negotiated settlement could not be reached.
- Concerns about have been expressed about the actions of the Specific Claims branch with respect to its processing of claims. These and other issues are likely to be brought forward as part of the 5-year policy review that Canada will conduct this year on its Specific Claims Action Plan.
- AFN recently hosted two “think tanks” in February and March, 2012, to hear from First Nations about their experience with Specific Claims over the past few years.

Additions to Reserve (ATR)

- Based on resolution 70-2011, Improving the Additions to Reserve Policy and Process, AFN is continuing its work jointly with Canada to review all policy, legislative and operational options with respect to improving the Additions to Reserve process with a view to bringing comprehensive recommendations for reform to the Chiefs-in-Assembly at the next Assembly.
- To this end, AFN coordinated a series of six Regional Dialogue Forums throughout the last year to gather input on changes that are required.
- AFN will also carry out up to 7 ATR case studies prior to the end of the current fiscal year to inform its work moving forward.
- On April 3, 2012, BCAFN Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould, along with AFN officials, presented to the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples on key issues with regards to ATR as part of the Committee’s ongoing study.
- Further reporting on these and other issues will continue in coordination with the Chiefs Committee on Claims.

Advancing Economic and Environmental Interests

- The AFN hosted the first International Indigenous Summit on Energy and Mining in Niagara Falls, Ontario, June 27-29, 2011. More than 800 Indigenous leaders, citizens, and government and industry representatives gathered in Niagara Falls, Ontario for three days of presentations, dialogue and discussion.
- The Summit represented an opportunity for First Nations to drive forward energy policy and mining development based on our rights and responsibilities and ended with a firm commitment to future collaboration and support for
First Nations and tribal nations participation in energy and mineral development in ways that respect our rights and work for our nations, the environment and our economies.

- During this event a CEO roundtable was co-hosted by Ian Anderson, Kinder Morgan CEO, and Chief Kim Baird.
- A discussion paper to Support First Nations and Clean Energy and builds on the potential of the energy sector and partnerships. In addition a concept paper on establishing a virtual resource centre to support information needs encountered by First Nation communities in developing energy projects.
- We continue to promote the elements of the First Nation National Action Plan on Human Resources Development: relationships, resources, employment parity and private sector engagement. The core message of First Nations playing a critical role in responding to labour force shortages was a key part of an ad in the Hill-Times, and in a special insert in the SAY Magazine published in time for the Crown – First Nation Gathering.
- The First Nation Technical Working Group on Human Resources Development met with federal counterparts on improving the transition to the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy in addition to begin advocating for discussions for a further five-year renewal of the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership (ASEP) initiative. Their next meeting is proposed for late April or early May.
- As per Resolution 02-2010 on Economic Development, AFN is working on resource revenue options, green economy, inter-nation trade, broadband and high speed internet, and a five year poverty intervention study.
- The AFN Chiefs Committee on Economic Development has considered a draft and joint terms of reference for a joint AFN - INAC task force on economic activation. The outcomes statement following the Crown – First Nation Gathering committed to implementing the joint task force. A call for nominations has been sent to First Nations broadly as part of the National Chief’s Bulletin on January 31, 2012.
- The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief and AFN Regional Chief for the Yukon, Eric Morris, Grand Chief John, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Chief David, and Chief Chamberlain, together with First Nation leaders and business proponents concluded a First Nation Trade Mission to China.
- The trade mission was an opportunity to strengthen relationships and explore partnership opportunities with the Chinese government and industry. The trade mission, with objectives of information, education, and cultural exchanges and economic development, has been supported and encouraged by the Chinese Ambassador in Canada. The People’s Republic of China through the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries hosted the mission’s delegation and facilitated meetings with the government and businesses.
- Meetings took place in Beijing, Dalian, Chengdu, Beichuan and Shanghai. The trade mission also included the grand opening of the First Nation Grain Management Office in Dalian and a key meeting with Chinese Renewable Energy Industries Association. There will be continued work with the Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China and the Canadian Embassy on a potential AFN-China joint symposium on trade, as well as ongoing work to identify and build partnerships.
- AFN has participated in a federal two day forum on information communication technology. A meeting of First Nation technicians took place in Vancouver on February 21, 2012.

Environment and Fisheries

- We are working on recognition and respect for First Nations rights, jurisdiction, management and access to water and sanitation.
- We are working as advocates towards government and industry to ensure First Nations take their rightful place in the climate change discussion.
- We are monitoring parliamentary activities regarding the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act along with the 5 year review of the Species at Risk Act.
- We are supporting First Nations seeking to protect their territories from environmental damage caused by pollution and harmful impacts left from industrial activities. We are also conducting ongoing research projects to provide First Nations with the information they need to assess the state of environmental health in their communities.
- We are supporting First Nations to take a leadership role in various natural resource sectors including forestry, source water protection and fisheries. We are providing support for communities that have been or are potentially
affected by the adverse impacts of chemicals in the environment, indoor air pollution and nuclear fuel waste
disposal.
• We are conducting work to increase access by First Nation to fisheries and markets, addressing aquatic health and
providing support for priority regional issues that require a national response.

Infrastructure
• AFN hosted a very successful three day water conference, March 5-7, 2012 at the Marriott River Cree Resort in
Enoch, Alberta. The conference consisted of a one day special session on First Nations Water Rights, followed by a
two day technical water conference. A report is forthcoming and work is underway to develop a National Strategy
on First Nation Water Rights for consideration of Chiefs at the 2012 Annual General Assembly.
• AFN continues advocacy for the development of a business plan and identification of resources by AANDC to
address the $4.3 billion need for water and wastewater for First Nations for the next ten years. Work will
continue with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities on the AANDC funded Community Infrastructure
Partnership Program project that has developed a toolkit to foster relationships between First Nations and adjacent
municipalities across Canada, encouraging mutually beneficial service agreements – particularly those pertaining to
water and wastewater infrastructure. This project has hosted several workshops on this subject and is planning
further workshops.

Housing
• We are currently developing a First Nations Institutional Framework for Housing to build capacity. This framework
will assist First Nations in the development of a Regulatory Environment and define the necessary Operational
Controls for sound housing portfolios.
• We are also supporting housing with a focus on economic development, job opportunities and First Nation
objectives.
• The “Building Homes and Building Skills” joint pilot project aimed at building green and sustainable First Nation
housing and communities continues with Atikameksheng Anishnawbek (formerly known as Whitefish Lake First
Nation) as the site project and AFN and the Holmes Foundation as the major partners. The pilot project has
generated interest from universities and other institutions. AFN is working with the University of Manitoba to
update the First Nations Illustrated Housing Code. In collaboration with the Holmes project an environmental
health research project is being conducted that will assess the impact of improved housing on indoor air pollution
and cardiovascular health.
• The AFN has been active in a First Nation Indoor Air Quality Committee that is developing two pilot projects that
will implement a First Nation Self-Assessment Tool for mold in housing. With this tool there will be training and
capacity development measures made available to overcome the problems.
• We are working with Habitat for Humanity to select a First Nation community where a Habitat for Humanity
project will be constructed this year. This is following the Statement of Partnership signed between AFN and
Habitat for Humanity to foster greater involvement with organizations and industry to provide other opportunities
for home ownership for First Nations on and away from their community. This partnership has also resulted in
securing a seat on Habitat for Humanity National Leadership Council for the National Chief.
• Following a workshop on roles and responsibilities in December 2011 with key stakeholders involved in First
Nation Housing, the AFN has taken the responsibility to work on the terms of reference for a revitalized national
Housing Liaison Committee.
• We will be involved in the evaluation of the First Nations Market Housing fund and secured a position on the
AANDC Advisory Committee for the evaluation of the Fund.
Emergency Issues Management

• AFN has been an active and vocal advocate for quick and sustained support for communities in states of emergency and will continue in this role.
• In addition we are working on the “Guidelines for Developing Agreements for Emergency Management Services in Support of On-Reserve First Nations Communities in Canada” with the Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management / First Nations -Inuit-Northerners Working Group.
• As per Resolution 33-2011 we will continue to support Fire Prevention services in First Nation communities and the efforts and activities of duly mandated firefighting organizations.
• More broadly, we will enhance efforts to ensure First Nation capacity to respond to emergencies and will continue to monitor and advocate for better conditions for First Nations experiencing dangerous conditions.

Upcoming AFN Events

April 26 – 27, 2012 – Treaty Roundtable, Ottawa, Ontario
• For more information please contact Regina Toulouse at 1-866-869-6789 ext. 263 or at rtoulouse@afn.ca.

April 26 – 27, 2012 – Comprehensive Claims Working Group, Ottawa, Ontario
• For more information please contact Tonio Sadik at 1-866-869-6789 ext. 280 or at tsadik@afn.ca.

July 17 – 29, 2012 – 33rd Annual General Assembly, Toronto, Ontario
• Keep checking www.afn.ca for updates and a preliminary agenda.