SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 6, 7 & 8, 2011, OTTAWA, ON

Resolution no.46/2011

TITLE:	Call for Fundamental Structural Change to Support all First Nation communities in crisis
SUBJECT:	Emergency and Long-Term Support for First Nation Communities
MOVED BY:	Chief Bob Chamberlain, Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxw'mis, BC
SECONDED BY:	Chief Dean Sayers, Ojibways of Batchewana First Nation, ON
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

A. The community of Attawapiskat has a Treaty relationship with the Crown. Canada has no mechanism to implement the Treaty and has reduced this to a financial matter.

B. The community of Attawapiskat has had long standing challenges with regards to community infrastructure, housing, and education and has not received attention or support from the Government of Canada.

C. On October 28, 2011, the Mushkegowuk Council declared a state of emergency as temperatures were dropping to dangerous levels and many Attawapiskat citizens were without housing and living in crowded conditions in temporary shelters or substandard structures.

D. The situation in Attawapiskat has since garnered significant media attention and prominence in the House of Commons.

E. In response to these issues, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development has placed Attawapiskat under third party management, which effectively removes control of finances and decision-making from the elected leadership.

F. The situation in Attawapiskat is a national tragedy but is not unique. Too many First Nations have similar living conditions and face quality of life challenges on a daily basis.

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G. On December 1, 2011, the Prime Minister agreed to hold a Crown-First Nations gathering on January 24, 2012. This gathering represents an opportunity 'to re-set the relationship' on the basis of Treaty and inherent rights and begin the work of fundamental structural change required to advance our economies and the respect and dignity of all of our peoples.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Fully support the leadership and citizens of Attawapiskat First Nation in their efforts to address the emergency needs of their people including ensuring adequate housing and health supports.
2. Extend full support to all First Nations that are facing problems with the living conditions in their communities and commit to reach out to all sectors of Canadian society to respond to these needs and to take all political action necessary to achieve change for First Nation communities and their citizens.
3. Instruct the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development and the federal Cabinet to work with the Chief and Council of Attawapiskat to address immediate needs and to begin the work of creating sustainable joint solutions for the future as opposed to unilateral actions, such as the imposition of third party management without involving the community, that undermine the authority of Chief and Council.
4. Demand that the Government of Canada take urgent and sustained action to work with all First Nations, especially those facing emergency situations lacking basic supports, to ensure they have the tools and investments necessary to address infrastructure challenges, including safe and adequate housing, clean drinking water, medical and health supports and education that respect their economic sovereignty
5. Clearly assert that any new action to address these urgent situations does not take away from exisiting, inadequate resources.
6. Instruct the AFN to request the United Nations Economic and Social Council and Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues appoint a Special Rapporteur to monitor Canada's actions in this area and to hold Canada to its responsibilities under the Treaties with First Nations and additional international treaties and covenants.

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