



Building Our Future

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is the national body representing First Nations governments and approximately one million people living on reserve and in urban and rural areas. The National Chief is elected every three years and receives direction from the Chiefs-in-Assembly. The AFN is dedicated to advancing the priorities of First Nations through review, study, response and advocacy on a broad range of issues and policy matters.

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*AFN Annual General Assembly artwork by Betty Albert
This piece is entitled, "Hummingbird Medicine Woman."*

Betty Albert (Wabimeguil) was adopted and raised by French Canadian parents in Northern Ontario. Circumstances eventually brought her back to her biological parents discovering her birthright as Cree. She spent the next 30 years of her life painting her experiences on her spiritual journey. She now lives in Manitoba where she participates in ceremony, painting and enjoying being a grandmother.



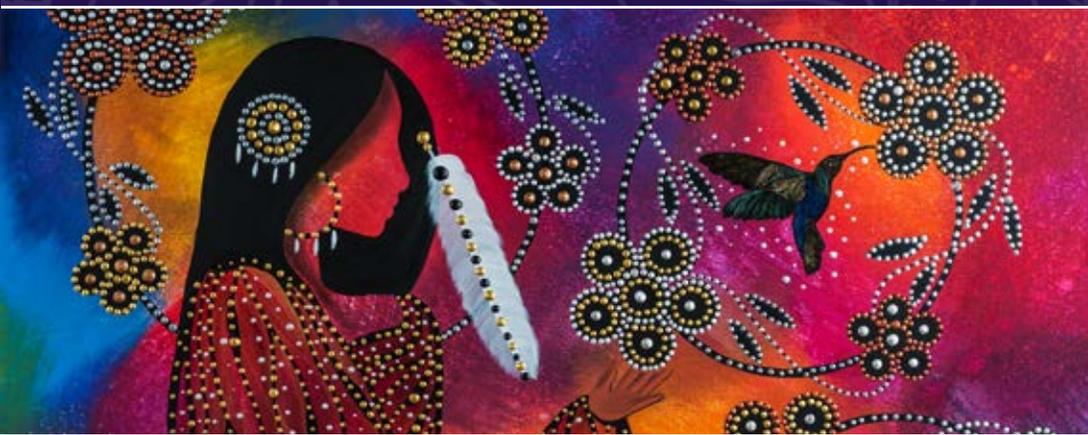
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National Chief Report



Annual Report from the National Chief

Chiefs, Councillors, friends, relatives, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, I hope that these words find you safe, surrounded by loved ones, and in good spirits.

I send my prayers to all families who have lost loved ones to this terrible pandemic. I am honoured to acknowledge and raise up all of you: Chiefs, councillors, community members, our frontline workers and volunteers – everyone who has worked so hard and sacrificed so much to keep us as safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When I first accepted the nomination to run for the office of National Chief, I vowed that I would always fight for the values that define and unite us as First Nations. Our Assembly of First Nations has shown – many times over – just how much can be accomplished when we uphold those values. This last year we demonstrated the importance, the necessity and the power of solidarity and unity.

In 2020-21, we came together to do all we could to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on First Nations people – wherever our people live. First Nations pulled together and took action to ensure the distribution of PPE, to close our communities and to ensure priority access to life-saving vaccines for our most vulnerable.

And even in the midst of this crisis, we continued our work to achieve vital reforms to Canadian law and policy that lay the foundations for a better future for all our people.

COVID-19

COVID-19 has proven particularly dangerous to First Nations communities. I have been impressed and inspired by the wisdom and efficiency of the early response efforts that significantly reduced the spread and impact of this pandemic. Data tells us that the on-reserve infection rate is less than two-thirds of the national average and the mortality rate is even lower. The recommendation by the independent National Advisory Committee on Vaccination to prioritize First Nations, along with the rapid mobilization and public education by First Nations leadership, has led to widespread immunization. I'm proud of the fact that the majority of our Elders are now fully immunized.

From the outset of the pandemic, the AFN worked with the federal government to ensure that national COVID strategies included a specific First Nations component with adequate funding to support our Nations and meet their specific needs. The AFN's advocacy led to the January 2021 announcement that the federal government would allocate an additional \$1.2 billion in funding to support Indigenous responses to COVID-19, including new investments in long-term care and Elder care facilities.



Investing in First Nations and Closing the Gap

Throughout both of my mandates, I have made a priority of closing the gap in quality of life for First Nations families and communities. Since I was elected in 2015, First Nations successfully advocated for over \$45 billion in new funding for our priorities. Year after year, we have been able to achieve significant, unprecedented increases in federal funding. This year, the 2021 budget marks the largest increase in funding for First Nations in Canadian history. The 2021 budget commitments include:

- \$6 billion for infrastructure and essential services for Indigenous communities,
- \$1.2 billion for Indigenous education,
- \$1 billion for Indigenous child and family services,
- \$861 million to improve policing in Indigenous communities,
- \$460 million for language and culture programs,
- \$150 million for an Indigenous economic growth fund, and
- \$74 million for a new Indigenous justice strategy.

In addition to this dramatic increase in overall funding levels, we have accomplished crucial reforms in how federal funds are allocated. There are now more opportunities for multi-year and long-term funding. This is essential for effective planning and to ensure the stability and sustainability of programs.

Implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Just a couple weeks ago, the House of Commons voted to pass Bill C-15, the federal law to implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (the UN Declaration). This is something to celebrate.

Passage of Bill C-15 represents an historic step forward. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* affirms our inherent and Treaty rights. It contains, as does international law, key provisions to protect and not detract from our rights.

This new law affirms that the UN Declaration, as an international human rights instrument, has legal effect in Canada— **now**. The work now lies ahead of us to engage in critical law and policy reform. We have a statutory commitment from Canada to get that work done **with** us.

This new law requires Canada to work with First Nations to ensure the laws of Canada are aligned with the minimum standards of the UN Declaration. The federal Declaration legislation clearly states that Canada must “take all measures necessary to ensure that the laws of Canada are consistent with the Declaration.”

With Bill C-15 adopted, federal law now requires this federal government, and all future federal governments, to work



National Chief Report

cooperatively with First Nations to put our rights into concrete practice. The federal government must establish in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, an action plan to achieve the objectives of the declaration, such as concrete actions to end racism prejudice and discrimination.

The new law also sets a two-year timeline for Canada to complete this work with us. It requires regular reporting to Parliament on progress.

It wasn't that long ago that federal politicians and bureaucrats were routinely dismissing the UN Declaration as merely "aspirational" – something they were free to ignore. When C-262 was blocked in the Senate in 2019, the Chiefs-in-Assembly responded with Resolution 86/2019 which called for the introduction of **government** legislation following the same model as C-262 and to be at least as strong as that bill.

Bill C-15, tabled in December 2020, meets and exceeds the test set by Chiefs-in-Assembly. That Bill saw improvements from the federal consultative draft and later more improvements were secured to respond to some key First Nations concerns expressed in the engagement process. Several key amendments brought forward by the AFN to address First Nations concerns with the Act were passed by Parliament. These helped ensure the shape of the Bill was even clearer and stronger than that first federal draft.

What happens next is in your hands. The adoption of Bill C-15 is an opportunity and how each First Nation chooses to use it, is completely up to you. It is a tool. It is your right to self-determination. It is your future to shape.

I believe the new law will greatly strengthen your hand in your dealings with other governments and with industry. It will help break the long-standing impasse on federal policies on vital concerns such as implementation of First Nations law, our inherent rights and title, and respect and implementation of Treaty rights.

Implementing the Calls for Justice and the Calls to Action

I have proudly supported the AFN Women's Council as they press for federal action to ensure implementation of the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. On June 3rd, the federal government announced Canada's first ever National Action Plan on violence against women— one of the foundational Calls for Justice and something that the AFN has been working toward for many years. AFN regional engagement processes have been launched to continue our "families first" approach to mobilize action for all First Nations. The National Action Plan is one of the many ways we are making progress toward implementation of both the Inquiry's Calls for Justice and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action. Both Commissions called for full



implementation of the UN Declaration. As noted above, with the passage of C-15 we have now established an undeniable legal commitment for the federal government to move ahead with national implementation in a concrete and cooperative way.

Reform of the child welfare system is another critical area of implementation of the Calls for Justice and the Calls to Action. Through the mechanisms set out in Bill C-92 the *2019 Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, more than 20 First Nations have already entered into coordination agreements to take up jurisdiction over family services. The AFN continues to work toward the full implementation of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal rulings on equitable, non-discriminatory funding of children's services and implementation of Jordan's Principle. In February 2020, the AFN initiated a \$20 billion class action suit seeking damages

for First Nations children who have been removed from their families and cultures. AFN led the way in ensuring action on the TRC Calls to Action to protect, revitalize and restore our First Nations languages. We are now working hard on implementation of Bill C-91 with measures to support First Nations jurisdiction over languages; this is vitally important work to overcome the colonial, repressive legacy of the Indian Residential School System.

Combatting Racism and Discrimination

Over the last year, the AFN has been front and centre in an unprecedented national conversation on racism and discrimination. Two critical areas of engagement and action were health care and policing.

In September, Joyce Echaquan, a young Atikamekw woman, died in a Quebec hospital after streaming video of the racist treatment she had endured. The AFN has





National Chief Report



strongly supported Joyce's Principle, a standard of non-discrimination and culturally safe care developed by the Council of the Atikamekw of Manawan and the Council de la Nation Atikamekw after Joyce's death. While we know that racism in the provision of health care services is an ugly and unacceptable reality for First Nations, Joyce's courage and strength made Canadians see it too. Across all regions, First Nations are pushing back and saying, 'no more.' Change must come.

There is no debate that systemic racism is real. Now, we must begin the real work of doing something about it. We secured a federal commitment to co-develop much needed legislation to ensure equitable funding for First Nations police services. This is crucial to support policing that is responsive and accountable to the needs of our communities.

It's again worth noting that the UN Declaration implementation Act includes some of the strongest anti-racism and anti-discrimination language of any law ever passed by any legislature in Canada. Through our advocacy, we succeeded in introducing amendments to make the Act even stronger. Critically, the Act commits Canada to ensure that its Action Plan for implementing the UN Declaration includes concrete measures to combat all forms of racism, discrimination and violence.

Gaming Jurisdiction Talks to Open

We have secured the agreement of David Lametti, Minister of Justice to open discussions with interested First Nations, and the AFN Chiefs Committee on Gaming, on how to amend the Criminal Code of Canada to respect First Nations jurisdiction over gaming. The Minister will be reaching out to the AFN Chiefs Committee to discuss possible approaches to engagement.



Confronting the Climate Crisis

Climate change is the greatest crisis of our time. The natural world is facing catastrophic devastation that has left our future and Mother Earth in jeopardy. Our young people are right in demanding that we do more.

Part of the solution is ensuring that governments set effective climate change goals and have the tools to meet these goals. The AFN played an important part in the negotiation of the Paris Climate Agreement and we have successfully advocated for the adoption of strong national targets that were announced this April to meet international goals for greenhouse gas reduction. Earlier this year, the AFN intervened in a landmark Supreme Court decision which upheld the power of the federal government to combat the climate crisis by requiring every province and territory to set a price on carbon emissions.

The AFN has also advocated to ensure that First Nations benefit from the necessary transition to a green economy. Through our advocacy, the federal government has devoted \$700 million to assist First Nations in reducing dependency on costly and unsustainable diesel generators. Through meaningful investment in renewable energy projects, we can not only meet the energy needs of First Nations, but we can also develop the experience and know-how to position First Nations as leaders in the new green economy.

Conclusion

My friends and relatives, I am very proud of everything that we have accomplished together. As this will be my last AGA as National Chief, let me take this opportunity to say what a privilege it has been to serve alongside all of you. These have been difficult times for our families, our communities, and our Nations. Yet, despite these challenges, we have found new and innovative ways of working together. We have worked with honour and integrity to fulfill the trust placed in us. And we have made a real difference for the future of our children.

I have always said that the role of a Chief is best described by the Cree word, *oskâpêwis*. The *oskâpêwis* is the one that helps build the Sun Dance lodge. The *oskâpêwis* is the one who brings in the rocks for the sweat-lodge ceremony. For the last seven years, I have had the privilege of being surrounded by people who I consider to be true *oskâpêwis*, servants of their people who are always ready to help out.



National Chief Report

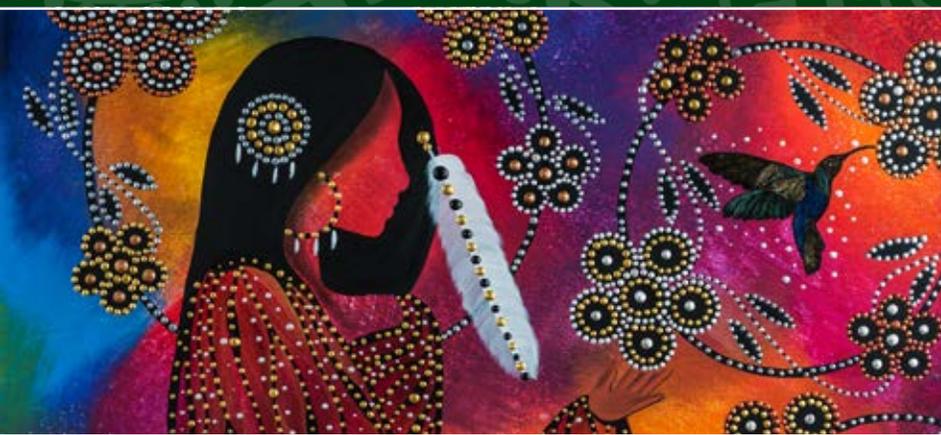


I want to lift up all the Chiefs, to honour all you have accomplished and acknowledge the support and guidance you have given me over the years. I also want to acknowledge all our staff at the Assembly of First Nations for their expertise and commitment to the betterment of our communities.

As always, the election of a new National Chief is an opportunity to bring fresh energy and fresh perspectives to the fore. Such renewal is a necessary and vital part of the life of any institution or organization. I know that whoever you chose as the next National Chief, our Assembly of First Nations will be in good hands.

The strength of the Assembly of First Nations is the strength of unity. We have shown that when we work together, we are capable of great things, no matter how difficult the struggle. Our foundations are strong. But we cannot afford to be complacent. If we are to prevail, we must remember our teachings. And we must remain united.

*Kinanāskomitinawow,
National Chief Perry Bellegarde*



Regional Chiefs' Reports



Regional Chief Paul Prosper *Nova Scotia and Newfoundland*

Kwe Nituptup.

I am honoured to represent the Mi'kmaq leadership for Newfoundland and Nova Scotia as their Regional Chief. Since my election in September 2020, I have gained much knowledge and experience from National Chief Bellegarde, Regional Chiefs and Assembly of First Nations (AFN) staff. As leadership, we face many challenges at local, regional and national levels.

Throughout this year, much continues to take place in the Region. The Marshall livelihood fishery continues to be subject to direct action amidst much political and legal debate. Our Regional Office is incorporating further to a motion from the AFN Executive. In Newfoundland, we are setting up an AFN sub-office and staffing a key position. The rise of COVID-19 has prevented most travel and in-person meetings. Despite this fact, we have been active on many national and regional initiatives. My portfolio and committee involvement with the AFN has provided me with an informed perspective on leadership and consensus building.

The following are some key Issues and Activities that have taken place in the Region:

- **Marshall Livelihood Fishery:** ongoing consultations, negotiations and litigation with Mi'kmaq and government officials. Submission before The Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries & Oceans. Participation on various committees and technical briefings.

- **Regional Office Incorporation and Staffing:** our office is incorporating through an approved Board structure. Additional work is ongoing on office setup, administration and staffing in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.
- **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Regional Engagement:** our office has been working with AFN staff to undertake engagement with grassroots women's groups to ensure meaningful involvement and participation.
- **Governance and Strategic Planning:** events surrounding the fishery has caused added stress and frustration with leadership. Work has been undertaken to incorporate culture and spirituality in the decision-making process.
- **Mi'kmaq Membership:** the Regional Office has been working with First Nations leadership to address membership issues. These issues are long outstanding and require a genuine commitment by Indigenous Services Canada.
- **Mi'kmaq Child Welfare:** work is ongoing on the development of a Mi'kmaq law to administer Child Welfare services in Nova Scotia. Recent discussions have focused on the interplay of s. 35 self-government rights and legislation established by Bill C-92.



- **Nova Scotia (NS) House of Assembly:** discussions have taken place regarding the development of a seat for a Mi'kmaq representative in the NS House of Assembly. To date, leadership have been receptive to this idea and discussions are ongoing with provincial officials.
- **Systemic Racism and Moderate Livelihood Fishery:** the regional office has been working with several Senators to examine systemic racism in the Moderate Livelihood fishery.
- **INAC Workplan Engagement:** Discussions have taken place with INAC Senior Officials on the development of a joint Regional Workplan.
- **Native Women and Youth:** leadership has approved the involvement of youth and Native Women within the proposed Board structure for the Regional Office and will support ongoing work.

As portfolio holder for Lands, Territories and Resources, I am pleased to offer an update on four key policies: The Comprehensive Land Claims Policy, the Inherent Right to Self-Government Policy, the Additions-to-Reserve Policy, and the Specific Claims Policy. These important policies need to be revamped to meet the distinct needs of First Nations across the country. This work is rights-driven and respects the self-determination of all First Nations. Work on Comprehensive Land Claims and the

Inherent Right to Self-Government Policies were initially focused on understanding First Nations approaches to the assertion of rights. AFN mandates call for processes that are First Nations driven and create space for all Nations. The Additions-to-Reserve Policy is time consuming, costly, and requires significant technical expertise. It is imperative that First Nations add lands to their reserves so they can grow and develop. Budget 2021 included \$43 million in new funding to support the ATR process. We are advocating for funding to support a meaningful review of the ATR policy and the development of options for reform in partnership with First Nations. We have made significant progress in advocating for a truly independent specific claims process. In early 2021, we completed a draft proposal based on input from First Nations and supported by AFN Resolution 09/2020, *Jointly Develop a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*. Public comment on the draft proposal will take place during the summer of 2021. This work will inform the joint development of options with Government to create a fully independent specific claims process consistent with the minimum standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and AFN Mandates.





Regional Chiefs' Reports

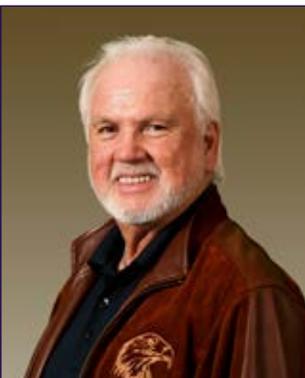
The Mi'kmaq are advancing a rights recognition framework in such areas as membership, Child Welfare, Income Assistance, Health and the Livelihood Fishery. These involve discussions, consultation and negotiations with the provincial and federal governments through structured processes. Since the Supreme Court of Canada released the Marshall fishing decision on September 17, 1999, the Mi'kmaq have been seeking to implement their rights through each Band's fishery management plans. Despite the federal government's failure to justify their regulations, the Mi'kmaq will continue to advance their rights in accordance with their law, culture and traditions. Band membership, infrastructure, housing, reserve creation, and off-reserve issues also remain key issues in the Region.

The past several months have been a great learning experience and I truly appreciate the passion and commitment of the Chiefs, Regional Chiefs, National Chief and the AFN staff. As leadership, we face both similar and unique challenges. We must unite on key issues for the betterment of all our future generations. Let our Vision be strong and overcome any challenge we face.

In Recognition of First Nations legal and human rights. Wela'liq!







Regional Chief Roger Augustine

New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island

On behalf of the First Nations Chiefs of NB/ PEI and their communities, I send prayers to our brothers and sisters across Turtle Island so that we remain safe — physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally — throughout these times.

Introduction

The leadership of our Chiefs in the region has never been more paramount. In the face of constant challenges, the unity and determination to stand up for what has always been rightfully ours has never been more ardent. While the struggle continues, we never lose sight of the value of maintaining our cultures, languages, and focus on future generations. Your dedication and honour for your communities instills hope for our people. Meanwhile, the next generations are supporting us by acting as stewards of our Mother Earth, protecting the environment. For this we are eternally grateful!

Regional Key Issues and Activities:

Constant challenges to our inherent and Treaty rights have put our leadership on the offensive. The lack of respect from governments has created a unity of our leadership. This unity has forged a force that promises immeasurable progress for our people in the fight to have our inherent rights recognized and implemented. Although the true test of the sincerity of the federal government to acknowledge our rights, such as the right to a moderate livelihood, is yet to be affirmed to its fullest, we remain steadfast in our beliefs and will

practice our traditional rights as the Creator intended.

Taxation agreements are now being challenged by the provincial government. Once again, there is a blatant disregard for prior and proper consultation on issues affecting our people. The provincial government offers little to no support for the social wellbeing of our communities. The marginal existence of our programs such as childcare, welfare, and schools are based on the abilities of our communities to be self-sufficient contingent on agreements with previous governments.

Federal land claims are still being recognized for some of our communities. We applaud the efforts of the respective Chiefs and their support teams for these successes. These claims are a great support mechanism for future economic development opportunities. Congratulations to Chief Patricia Bernard of Madawaska Maliseet Nation on her recent favourable decision.

Interest in climate change has reached an all time high in our region. Organizations are advancing in their resources, education and community involvement. The AFN Climate Change team is very active and supportive in efforts to involve and educate our respective regions. Several meetings, workshops and communication strategies ensure that we are up to date with modern technology and information, and our efforts are on par with the rest of the world. Appreciation is extended to our representatives on the various related committees.



As a region, we are very proud of the way we reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic. We must continue to remain vigilant to protect the most vulnerable in our communities. Much respect to the front-line workers who made it so!

National Portfolio #1:

As co-chair of the National Fisheries Committee (NFC), I appreciate the efforts of the NFC members for their support of fisheries issues from coast to coast. On the East Coast we are facing challenges to our inherent Treaty rights from the Federal government. Despite our best efforts to negotiate, including the development of management plans that are unique and superior to existing DFO regulations, there will be efforts from the government to prevent us from practicing these rights.

On the West Coast, their rights to participate in the commercial fishery and the depletion of certain species of fish are major concerns for Co-Chair Regional Chief Terry Teegee. As is the case across the country, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans continues to believe they have the right to dictate how we manage our own resources. More resources and support are needed to maintain our efforts to address these challenges to our Treaties and inherent rights.

National Portfolio #2:

The Management Committee has increased its efforts to ensure that the National Office continues to uphold its fiduciary responsibility to our people across the country. As Chair of the National Committee, I am confident in the ability of the current

members to ensure that all financial accountabilities are in place and that all policies and procedures, as per the Charter are being followed. Transparency is of the utmost importance, not only to our people we represent, but to the funding resources of our respective programs.

The Path Ahead/Looking forward:

As we update the Charter and the organizational structure of the Assembly of First Nations, I am confident in the ability of the AFN Secretariat to provide the technical tools we need to address the ever-changing political climate within the federal government. It is key for our regional leadership to take advantage of opportunities to be involved at the national level through the various committees. Through this consistency we can maintain a network that puts us on an even playing field across the country. We acknowledge that all communities experience varying levels of growth and prosperity based on location within the country, but we must lift each other up and not leave each other behind. For now, and for the foreseeable future, we must rely on modern technology to support each other in our efforts to work together to maintain our inherent and Treaty rights, and for all that is important for future generations.

Conclusion:

Our future looks encouraging. Although we must struggle every day to make it so, I am proud of our leaders and our people for never giving up hope.

*In the Spirit of Peace and Friendship,
stay safe and stay strong.*





Regional Chief Ghislain Picard

Quebec-Labrador

Introduction

Regional Chief Ghislain Picard is Innu from the community of Pessamit. Since 1992, he has held the position of Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL), a political organization representing 43 Chiefs of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador. RC Picard is the portfolio holder for Justice and Policing and Border Crossing at the AFN.

In recent years, major reports have examined violence against First Nations girls and women, as well as many situations related to racism and discrimination against our peoples.

Commissioned by both the federal government and the province of Quebec, the reports in question produced a total of more than 850 recommendations and calls to action of all kinds. Where are the results? Where are the actions we can expect? What has really positively changed in the lives of women and girls, of all First Nations people? Are city streets safer, public services more adapted and welcoming? What actions should be taken in the face of a provincial government which not only does not seem in a hurry to implement the *Viens Commission's report on Relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Quebec's* recommendations, but moreover, refuses to recognize the very notion of systemic racism?

The legislative proposals put forward by the federal government, often presenting notable advances in the self-determination of the First Nations, require constant attention on the part of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL) chiefs and involve major steps of analysis, discussion and consultation.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which presents a constant health threat to First Nations due to unequal socio-economic conditions, the AFNQL chiefs had to take decisive actions and demonstrate a lot of cohesion and solidarity.

Regional Key Issues And Activities

Plan to fight racism and discrimination

The chiefs of the AFNQL maintain constant pressure on governments, in particular the province of Quebec, in order to force them to assume their responsibilities in the fight against racism and discrimination. In 2011, the AFNQL, with the support of several partners, held a public event following which a formal appeal was launched to the provincial government. A few years later, in support against the denunciations of First Nations women in connection with serious police abuses, the AFNQL pushed the provincial government to recognize its responsibilities. The Viens Commission was then set up with a mandate restricted to "certain public services" in Quebec. Even though the report was not designed in line with First Nations priorities, it still produced, based on hundreds of testimonies from First



Nations, and presented some interesting pathways. Almost two years after the report was tabled, however, virtually nothing has changed. Why?

Noting that the government of the recently elected Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) did not respond to the very concrete recommendations made to it, the AFNQL made the following bet: is the Quebec population more sensitive than its government to the challenges posed by the situation of First Nations? To verify this, the AFNQL commissioned a survey, the results of which appeared encouraging. For example, 74% of survey respondents believed that Quebec should consider the fight against racism and discrimination against First Nations as a priority. Where the provincial government does not want to go, its people seem ready, to act in the spirit of reconciliation and mutual understanding. It is on the basis of these observations that the AFNQL developed its Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination, launched in September 2020.

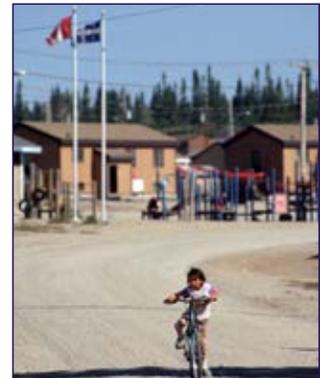
By tragic coincidence, the launch of the action plan was made public at the same time as an Atikamekw citizen, Ms. Joyce Echaquan, died at the Joliette hospital following a barrage of racist insults by staff that were shared widely on social networks. This tragedy triggered a movement of consternation, anger and solidarity among First Nations and residents of Quebec alike.

The action plan, based on the AFNQL's intention to speak directly to the population, is based on the idea of developing alliances

with citizens, groups and institutions of Quebec society. The recommendations of the reports submitted to both the federal and provincial governments have been consolidated and often serve as the basis for the discussions that take place, including through webinars on unifying themes. The AFNQL is also developing indicators that will make it possible to make findings public on various issues. The Action Plan is therefore part of the continuity, as well as the alliances developed within its framework.

The assessment/perspective on COVID-19

From the first stages of the pandemic and the start of the containment measures, the AFNQL, with the essential support and collaboration of the regional commissions and organizations accountable to the chiefs, activated a set of measures and networks in order to support First Nations governments in their efforts to ensure the protection of their populations. To date, efforts at all these levels have prevented massive outbreaks and severe impacts on our populations. Several regional initiatives have been implemented to support local efforts. After several months of applying these common measures, it was decided to collectively prepare an assessment/perspective of the actions taken to counter COVID-19. The goal of the report is to identify the actions taken and to assess them while also examining the lessons learned through sharing our collective perspectives. The link to the document is at: [Assessment and Outlook – First Wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic in First Nations in Quebec – Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) \(csssfnq.com\)](https://www.csssfnq.com).





The political and legislative initiatives of the federal government within the framework of the Reconciliation

The Parliamentary approval of Bill C-92 (*An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth, and Families*) and its implementation as mobilized the chiefs of the AFNQL and the First Nations institutions dedicated to these issues. It will continue to do so in the years to come. The Act is about what is most precious – our children. The implementation of this law is a high priority. The work to be done is highly complex and is in no way helped by the negative reaction of the provincial Commission's report on Relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Quebec

A similar reaction from the provincial government is to be expected in the face of other federal initiatives, such as Bill C-15 dealing with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), or the upcoming Indigenous health bill, or legislation on Indigenous policing as an essential service. These reactions are situations of great concern for the AFNQL.

The establishment of an AFNQL-Québec political table

In September 2020, faced with all of these issues, the AFNQL chiefs adopted the principle of a joint political table with the provincial government and entrusted the Regional Chief with the mandate to set it up.

The principle of the Political Table was accepted by the Premier of Quebec last

November. The terms of reference were adopted by both parties and work is beginning. The subjects that will be discussed first are related to health, social and children's services, as well as public safety.

National Portfolio Justice/ Policing Services

Regional Chiefs Picard and Teegee, who jointly hold the national justice and policing services portfolio, worked together to support the AFN in its demand for a national strategy and action plan for justice and First Nations police.

A First Nations justice and policing services working group is taking shape at the national level. Within its mandate, it expects to provide support and direction for the joint development of legislation on essential First Nations police services.

Regional chiefs Picard and Teegee actively participated during the National Forum on Bill C-15 on February 10 and 11, 2021 and collaborated in the organization of the National Forum on Police Services on March 16 and 17, 2021.

*Regional Chief Ghislain Picard
Quebec-Labrador*



Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald

Ontario

Wahcheeyay, Aanii, Boozhoo,
She:kon, Shekoli.

It is my pleasure to provide my Annual Report as Ontario Regional Chief. I continue to focus on leading with a heart-centered approach and at embodying leadership that is grounded in love and care, as well as holding space for respect in all my interactions.

Introduction

The past 18-months will go down in history as world-altering due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. I found myself having to pivot priorities and work more closely with the federal and provincial governments, health authorities and communities to save lives and protect the health and well-being of our citizens. I am proud to say we have been moving through this cooperatively, while respecting each other's decisions. With this unified approach, we have made our circle stronger.

Regional Key Issues and Activities:

COVID-19 Response

When the global pandemic was declared on March 11, 2020, it forever changed our world. First Nations leaders in Ontario very quickly to fluid situations while doing what needed to be done to keep citizens safe from harm through the development of timely information, tools and resources. Work in my office continues to be guided by the higher

purpose of preserving and protecting the health, well-being, and lives of First Nations citizens.

Minister's COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force – On December 4, 2020, I was formally appointed to this Task Force by the Solicitor General of Ontario to provide advice and recommendations, particularly from a First Nations perspective. As of May 27, 2021, more than 217,000 First Nations community members have received their first and second doses of the vaccine, including 95,000 on-reserve members. The COVID-19 Initiatives Team has been instrumental in successfully advocating for First Nations to receive the 21-28 day dosing schedule, developing infographics, media campaigns and strategies to engage First Nations community members on COVID-19 safety measures, creating an information and data tracking system to help Chiefs and health directors make informed decisions on how best to protect their communities, and developing a study looking at what we've learned about COVID-19 outbreaks within First Nations communities. The Team also prepared research papers on the economic impacts of COVID-19, a Second Wave paper providing insight into previous pandemics, food sovereignty and trade systems should the supply chain collapse, and land-based learning as a method of educating students during the pandemic.





Economic Growth & Prosperity Table

On May 11, 2021, the launch of the Economic Growth & Prosperity Table was announced. This Table will be a starting point toward greater economic cooperation between First Nations and the Government of Ontario and a platform to promote economic growth in First Nations communities. To ensure the success of the Prosperity Table is realized and First Nations have the support needed to coordinate efforts in the post-pandemic economic landscape, an Economic Strategic Division will be established at the Chiefs of Ontario. A Chiefs Committee on Economic Prosperity will also be established to guide the vision and direction of long-term economic growth and prosperity for First Nations in Ontario and ensure that First Nations play a substantive role in rebuilding Ontario's economy in the post-COVID-19 era.

Enforcement and Prosecution of First Nations Laws and By-laws

On May 6, 2021, Chiefs of Ontario launched the Tripartite Technical Table on Enforcement and Prosecution of First Nations Laws. Involved in this launch for Ontario were Attorney General Doug Downey and Solicitor General Sylvia Jones and representing Canada were Minister of Justice David Lametti and Minister Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, and Minister of Indigenous Services Canada Marc Miller.

Tobacco Gifting Ceremony

I will be meeting with Ontario Lieutenant Governor, Elizabeth Dowdeswell, before the end of my term where we will present Elder Garry Sault with a large quantity of tobacco that was gifted to the Lieutenant Governor by the Chapel Royal in 2020. Her Honour had presented me with the tobacco to hold in trust until we could safely gather in ceremony. During this ceremony, we will meet with the Elder, join for a prayer and present the tobacco to have it burned in the sacred fire, followed by a visit to the Chapel Royal.

Provincial Government Engagement

I have continued to work at building and strengthening positive relationships with the provincial government. I am in regular contact with Premier Doug Ford and have facilitated meetings with members of his Cabinet and the Leadership Council including Minister Greg Rickford, Minister Christine Elliott, Associate Minister Jill Dunlop, Minister Lisa MacLeod, Associate Minister Michael Tibollo, Attorney General Doug Downey, Solicitor General Sylvia Jones, and IAO Deputy Minister Shawn Batisse. I also met with MPP Sol Mamakwa regarding his Private Members Bill 286, The Inherent Right to Safe Drinking Water Act.

Federal Government Engagement

I am in regular contact with Indigenous Services Minister Marc Miller on a variety of issues. Other Ministers that I have regularly engaged with are Minister Carolyn Bennett, Minister Bill Blair, Minister Catherine



McKenna, Attorney General of Canada David Lametti, Minister Maryam Monsef, Minister Patty Hadju, Senior ADM Valerie Gideon, and RDG Anne Scotton.

AFN Women's Council/Women's Issues

The Chiefs-in-Assembly ordered an independent, fair, and impartial investigative review of the AFN to end sexual orientation and gender-based discrimination at the December AFN Special Chiefs Assembly. This is currently led by an independent three-member panel of external experts. The process is just getting underway.

The AFN Women's Council is scheduled to release the First Nations Action Plan on MMIWG, *Breathing Life into the Calls for Justice: An Action Plan to End Violence Against First Nations Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People*. It is expected to be a 32-page report with regional report components attached as appendices.

Water (Co-Lead on Housing/ Infrastructure/Water)

As lead of the Water Portfolio, I work closely with Regional Chief Kevin Hart, who leads the Housing and Infrastructure Portfolio. Ontario leadership has been participating at the AFN's Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure (CCOHI) meetings. The AFN CCOHI guides both of our work.

As of May 6, 52 long-term drinking water advisories are in effect in 33 First Nations in Ontario. We have initiated discussion with Indigenous Service Canada Ontario Region to work collaboratively to end all boil water

advisories in Ontario by 2023. The Chiefs of Ontario Secretariat will continue to coordinate this vital initiative moving forward.

I continue to support and encourage Autumn Peltier's important work as the Anishinabek Chief Water Commissioner. Autumn shared her strong beliefs on the environment and water at the Great Lakes Guardian's Council meeting on April 22, 2021. She continues to be an impressive advocate for clean water for First Nations.

AFN Management Committee and other related issues:

This committee functions as a review body before the AFN Executive Committee passes motions on management and administrative matters. Meetings are usually every other month or as required. My most recent work has focused on conflict of interest mitigation



"It's essential we be more proactive in our approach rather than react to both the federal and provincial governments' priorities."



with respect to the awarding of contracts and ensuring transparency through fair and consistent contract evaluation processes. My final task will be to have a positive impact on the AFN financial policy by providing input and recommendations.

Sport and Recreation:

In September 2020, I received the national portfolio for Sports and Recreation and received my first briefing. I am supportive of our youth and families as sports and recreation activities support the health and well-being of our communities. Most of my work on sports and recreation has been in relation to Ontario having more than one sports body to represent the diverse and large region.

The Path Forward:

At the time of writing this report Ontario region is in an election for a new Regional Chief. The path forward will be determined by the Ontario Leadership Council and the incoming Regional Chief.

End of Mandate Reflections:

In my view, leadership is about creating space and working collaboratively with others. By working alongside Chiefs, Leadership Council, Political Territorial Organizations, my staff, and the COO Secretariat, we accomplished:

- Ensuring \$19.6 Million in education funding was maintained for Ontario
- Establishing a Joint Bilateral agreement process on Education to ensure that First Nations receive adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding.
- Advocating for CMHC's Rapid Housing Initiative funding to go to First Nations, which resulted in the approval of sixteen on-reserve housing projects out of a total of twenty-one projects for all of Ontario;
- I supported the restructuring of the Chiefs of Ontario and the separation of the Office of the Regional Chief from the Chiefs of Ontario Secretariat by appointing a non-political board of directors and formalizing the establishment of a Leadership Council;

“We are in a process of creating a new reality where we can all live in peace and safety.”



- Directly influenced the creation of the Indigenous Women's Advisory Council. Ontario created this council to provide advice on human trafficking, family well-being, Ontario's MMIWG Action Plan, and support for children and youth.
- Established a Women's Initiatives Sector and Council of Elected Women Chiefs to interact with federal and provincial governments on their established priorities.
- Created an Elders Council at the Chiefs of Ontario that is gender-balanced.



Conclusion:

I want to acknowledge the strength and resiliency of the Leadership, Chiefs and Councils across our region. The past year has been difficult and First Nations leadership have risen to the challenge and continue to do tremendous work in keeping their communities safe.

*Wishing you Peace beyond
all understanding. Ninanaskamon!*

"It's essential we be more proactive in our approach rather than react to both the federal and provincial governments' priorities."



Regional Chief Bobby Cameron

Saskatchewan

Tansi, ʔedlanet'e, Hau, tonesked yaun?
On behalf of the 74 First Nations, Veterans, FSIN Executive, Staff, and Senate, we extend greetings from the ancestral lands and unceded territories of the Cree, Dēnesųłíné, Saulteaux, the Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota in kisiskāciwan (Saskatchewan).

Introduction

Education is the foundation for enlightening life-long opportunities. Higher education means better well-being, more stable employment, and improved individual and community well-being. First Nations students deserve an excellent education that inspires them to stay in school and to graduate, and one that enables them to obtain the skills they need to enter the workforce. We know that access to quality education for First Nations students is about more than legislation, and that legislation alone cannot ensure quality education. Legislation can, however, provide the framework for reform by clarifying roles and responsibilities, strengthening governance and accountability, and addressing the need for stable and predictable funding.

Regional Key Issues and Activities:

We are passionate about the importance of a treaty education for all Indigenous Peoples. FSIN, as the connection between First Nations and the federal government, has focused on rebuilding and enhancing the treaty relationship. Over many centuries, these relationships were eroded as colonial and paternalistic policies and laws were enacted. We embarked on a journey to

reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. It is a necessary journey to address a long history of colonialism and the scars left from the Indian Residential School era.

Lifelong learning education is a Treaty Right. First Nations are autonomous and have an inherent right to control all aspects of education, from early childhood through post-secondary. Responsibility of First Nations students falls entirely with the Crown as Treaty rights are portable.

Treaties provide a framework for living together and sharing the land within our traditional territories. The treaty agreements provide foundations for ongoing co-operation and partnership as we move forward together to advance our education systems. Canada needs to continue honouring the treaty relationship based on the recognition of rights and respect to achieve reconciliation with our people.

The 2021 federal budget additional investments promise \$1.2 billion over five years for three areas related to Indigenous education:

- 1) COVID-19 support, including PPE for students and staff as well as remote learning resources, will receive \$112 million in 2021-22;
- 2) Student transportation and Regional Education Agreements will receive \$726 million over five years, starting in 2021-22; and



3) First Nations adults on-reserve who wish to complete their high school degree will have \$350 million in funding support.

Over the years we have had many discussions on education with the government on a number of key issues. First Nations control of education and sufficient and predictable funding are fundamental to creating education systems that promote the success of First Nations students. Language and culture are critically important for the successful development, education and wellbeing of First Nations students.

Communities want to build First Nations' capacity to establish educational institutions that will deliver quality, culturally appropriate programs, and services for children. We continue to advocate for First Nations that want supports similar to those available to children who attend school off-reserve.

**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 8 & 9, 2020, OTTAWA,
two resolutions were carried.**

1. Resolution no. 20/2020 adopted on the 9th of December 2020 in Ottawa - TITLE: *Extension of Interim First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Regional Funding Allocation Approach* SUBJECT: *Early Learning and Child Care (Health, Social, Education).*

2. Resolution no. 21/2020 adopted on the 9th of December 2020 - TITLE: *First Nations-Led Local, Regional and Treaty-based Post-Secondary Education Models* SUBJECT: *Post-Secondary Education. to reaffirm First Nations inherent and Treaty right to post-secondary education.*

Elementary and Secondary Education

2019 Chiefs-in-Assembly supported the Resolution 22/2019, *Developing a ten-year Treaty Implementation Plan*, which calls for every school, grade and class in Canada to have access to Treaty education resources and training. The AFN education sector continues to consult First Nations, Treaty commissioners, the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) and the National Indian Education Council (NIEC) on this implementation plan.

The CCOE continues to advocate for elementary and secondary education programs that provide eligible students ordinarily living on-reserve with elementary and secondary school education programs equivalent to those in the province.

The elementary and secondary education program supports elementary and secondary education for First Nations students, schools and communities by working in partnership with the government to help close the education outcome gaps between First Nations peoples and other Canadians. By providing a more stable funding environment for First Nations education systems, this focus aims to create better and more consistent support for students, schools, communities, educators and First Nations education organizations because we are second to none.

The government has provided funding through interim regional funding formulas and transformative education agreements, such as regional education agreements, education authority agreements or other transformative education agreements.





High-cost Special education: the program includes funding for services provided to First Nations students identified as having mild to profound learning disabilities. Families of a First Nations child who is not receiving the services and support that they need may contact the Jordan's Principle regional focal point for assistance. These programs are quality programs and services that are culturally sensitive and reflective of generally accepted provincial or territorial standards.

There is other important programming that is set out to improve First Nations communities, schools and students such as Innovation in Education Program, Research and Learning Program and Education Partnerships Program.

Post Secondary Education

First Nations from across our Nation are leading a review of post-secondary education programming. CCOE, NIEC, representatives from the First Nations education institutes, technical teams of students, directors and post secondary coordinators are calling on the government and are providing recommendations to ensure improved access to post-secondary education and improved supports required for student success for First Nations.

The government currently has distinction-based strategies that support First Nations, Inuit and Metis Nations students pursuing post-secondary education. We continue to advocate for top-notch programming. There are many programs available for the Post-secondary students such as the Post-

Secondary Student Support Program, University and College Entrance Preparation Program, Post-Secondary Partnership Program, Funding for engagement on First Nations regional post-secondary education models, Inuit Post-Secondary Education Strategy, Indigenous Bursaries Search tool, and much more. It is highly recommended that these programs are known to First Nations Post-Secondary students.

Education Infrastructure and Capital Needs

We need more owned and operated education facilities on-reserve and are responsible for managing projects to renovate or build new facilities. The government of Canada provides funding to First Nations to build new schools, renovate and expand existing facilities, and operate and maintain existing education infrastructures. Education infrastructures can include school facilities such as classrooms, gyms, science labs, sports fields, home economic and shop facilities. We encourage the First Nations to apply for this available funding through the government of Canada.

First Nations Engineering Serviced Ltd (FNESL) provided a First Nations Education Infrastructure Capital Needs Assessment for the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). This national assessment provides a report on the short-, medium-, and long-term needs under current federal guidelines, including the 2016 School Space Accommodation Standards (SSAS) as well as the Level of Service Standards and Management of Teacherages on Reserve. The short-term, medium-term,



and long-term infrastructure needs for schools and teacherages in First Nations across the country is determined. There are currently 391 existing schools and 1026 existing teacherages analyzed in this study. On average, on-reserve First Nations schools were given a General Condition Rating (GCR) of 6.47 out of 10 on the last Asset Condition Reporting System (ACRS) inspection. For teacherages, the average GCR was 6.29 out of 10. Of the 391 existing schools, 47 schools also have portables. A capital cost estimate was developed for school facilities using the 2016 SSAS with projected enrolment. The enrolment projections are estimated based on current enrolment data, along with a projected growth rate of 0.8% per year and assumes that existing schools will continue to service the same grades as are currently offered. The total capital needs for schools over the 15-year planning period is approximately \$5.07 billion, which includes costs for additions, new construction, and planning and design costs.

The Path Ahead/Looking forward:

We will continue to advocate for the protection of inherent and Treaty Rights to education. We will advance First Nations jurisdiction over First Nations education; establish and carry out effective strategies regarding First Nations and other networks; provide political and strategic advice regarding First Nations educational matters to the NIEC, AFN Education Sector, and the AFN Executive Committee; carry out recommendations on the work of the NIEC and the AFN Education sector; and identify and address issues concerning First Nations

education. These objectives will be carried out within the mandates of the AFN Charter and resolutions adopted by the Chiefs-in-Assembly.

Conclusion:

The CCOE will continue to provide political direction, advice and recommendations on educational matters affecting First Nations to the National Chief, AFN Executive Committee, and the AFN Education sector. The CCOE will also adopt recommendations through a regional lens.

Hiy Hiy, ekosi Regional Chief Bobby Cameron, AFN Chief – Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN).



“First Nations students have the inherent and Treaty right to receive education that is in accordance with their culture, values, traditions, and languages free from prejudice and discrimination.”



Alberta Regional Chief Marlene Poitras

Alberta

Tansi,

It is my pleasure to provide my submission to the 2021 Assembly of First Nations Annual Report.

Introduction:

I have been honoured to serve as Regional Chief for the Alberta region for the last three years. My commitment as Regional Chief has been to ensure the recognition of First Nations inherent and Treaty rights in all forums, while respecting their Nation's autonomy and right to self-determination.

Regionally and nationally, the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the vast inequities and inequalities that continue to exist in health, social, education, justice, policing, housing, and infrastructure sectors between First Nations on reserve and the rest of Canada. Key among these gaps was jurisdiction and enforcement. Things must change.

Regional Key Issues and Activities:

COVID-19 Response

Our Alberta AFN office continues to make significant efforts to keep First Nations informed about national and regional updates and issues in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our office sends weekly COVID-19 bulletins with summaries of federal and provincial briefings, notable meetings and calls I participated in, and new information and documents for First Nations. Updates and news are also shared

on social media, our regional website, and the AFN Alberta mobile app.

As the appointed alternate chair for the AFN COVID-19 Task Force, we continue to work with the Executive Committee and First Nations to ensure we receive accurate information, analysis and recommendations for action during the pandemic. First Nations in Alberta are to be commended for their on-going efforts and action in securing their borders to keep their members safe.

Justice and Policing

Both regional and national governments are quickly advancing on this file which has resulted in a lot of work at the regional level. I have participated in both levels of government's engagement, advancing positions of regional First Nations when requested, and as an observer noting levels of participation on other accounts. I continue to maintain with all levels of government that Justice and Policing is a Treaty issue which impacts the rights of Sovereign First Nations and as such any efforts at reform require extensive and direct engagement with the Nations themselves. I met with the new Minister of Justice and Solicitor General for Alberta, Kaycee Madu and provided background information with the engagement on Policing reform in Alberta and in Canada. I continue to advocate that First Nations need to be directly involved from the start, before any comprehensive or fulsome plans on First Nations policing are unveiled.



Regional Engagement on the Repeal & Replacement of Canada's Safe Drinking Water Legislation & Strategic Objectives

We have contracted a Regional Water Coordinator to conduct outreach and engagement activities with First Nations in the region to create awareness about the repeal and replacement of Canada's Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act, and to provide input into a strategic path forward. In addition to outreach, the Coordinator has helped support a pre-engagement as well as an engagement session. Moving forward, the Coordinator will work closely with AFN National Water Team, and continue to liaise with First Nations leadership, knowledge keepers, youth and women, to organize, coordinate and facilitate regional meetings and engagements on a legislative framework and long-term drinking water and wastewater strategy.

Climate Change & Environment

Our office has contracted a Regional Climate Change Coordinator to collect climate related data and assist First Nations to understand and take action on climate related issues through outreach and engagement, research and information gathering. The Coordinator also monitors and provides briefs on provincial government policy and regulatory changes that impact on First Nations health, culture, rights, climate change and the environment.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls National Action Plan

Our region has planned for regional engagement to support the development of a First Nations and women-led evergreen plan to implement the National Action Plan for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). These sessions are planned with families and survivors, youth, men, industry and professionals. During the year, I met with Minister Carolyn Bennett and discussed federal progress on the National Action Plan towards addressing the 231 calls to action, and stressed the need for immediate action as well as the need to address systematic barriers and racism.

Regional Discussion Forum on Bill C-15, An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

On March 23 and 24, 2021, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Alberta Association hosted a virtual Regional Discussion Forum (the Forum) on Bill C-15, An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Bill C-15 or the Bill). The purpose of the Forum was to provide a venue to learn about the content of Bill C-15, and an opportunity for dialogue about the impacts of the Bill including its potential impact on First Nations' Treaty and inherent rights. It was acknowledged that there are many different views on Bill C-15. All perspectives were welcome and respected and it was made clear the Forum was in no way intended to be a formal "consultation" process. In part, the Forum aimed to explore





concerns and address questions about the interrelationship of Bill C-15 and Treaty.

Charter Renewal

The COVID-19 pandemic has slowed the work of the Committee and the ability of the Charter Renewal Team to engage face-to-face with First Nations in regions. However, the Chiefs Committee on Charter Renewal (CCoCR) is continuing to move forward with the modernization of the AFN Charter at a moderate pace. The Committee meets regularly for the purpose of identifying issues and proposing amendments which will be presented to Chiefs-in-Assembly for consideration. During the December 2020 Virtual Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA), two of the five recommended resolutions were brought forward and passed. AFN Resolution 01/2020, *AFN Knowledge Keepers Council* will see the AFN Elders Council be renamed AFN Knowledge Keepers Council. The second resolution passed was AFN Resolution 02/2020, *AFN First Nations Veterans Council* to recognize and establish a new organ to the AFN known as the First Nations Veterans Council.

The Chiefs Committee is bringing forward two resolutions to the 2021 AFN AGA on July 6-8, 2021. The first proposed amendment addresses inconsistencies in the Charter related to the description of quorum for decision making purposes and the articles require amendment to clarify quorum. The second resolution is regarding AFN composition change to include Prince Edward Island and allow for a PEI Regional Chief. As required by the Charter, Chiefs were provided with 60-day notice of the proposed Charter amendments.

Health

I continue to advocate for equitable access and support in all service areas for First Nations, but especially so in the health sector where decades of mistreatment and mistrust have resulted in the need for systemic change in policies and legislations, such as the recent Joyce's Principle. I participated in meetings to outline concrete actions that will help us move towards a health-care system that will effectively serve the most vulnerable. I also continue to advocate for the importance of the implementation of the Treaty Six Medicine Chest Clause and pestilence clause.

The following resolutions were carried: AFN Resolution 03/2020, *Addressing Priority Concerns and Needs of First Nations around COVID-19*; AFN Resolution 04/2020, *A Call for a moratorium of the research study titled: The Indigenous Journeys through COVID-19: A National Indigenous Seroprevalence Cross-Sectional and Community Sentinel Cohort Study*; as well as AFN Resolution 05/2020, *Principle for the elimination of racism and discrimination in the services provided to First Nations*.

As a response to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, I convened the Chiefs Committee on Health meetings every two weeks. These recurring meetings helped inform advocacy and actions needed at both a regional and national level.

Treaties

I have committed to ensuring Treaties are central in the work that I carry out, as the Treaties are the foundational base for our relationship with Canada.



AFN Resolution 78/2015, *Establish a Treaty Commissioner's Office* calls on the AFN to work with International Numbered Treaty (1-11) First Nations to support the development of a Treaty Commissioner's Office (TCO). In addition, both Honouring Promises and Minister Bennett's 2019 Mandate letter speak to the need for a Treaty Commissioner's Office to ensure Canada is meeting its Treaty obligations.

The Path Ahead/Looking forward:

The Chiefs Committee on Health and Health Sector will continue to collaborate with First Nations Partners in supporting the health and wellbeing of First Nations in areas including, but not limited to: Mental Wellness, Pandemic Response and Recovery, Public Health, Family Wellness, NIHB and Distinctions Based Health Legislation.

We have made some progress in charter renewal and more dialogue must occur with leadership to better understand and shape the changes that are needed in the Charter. The technical team is available to meet with Chiefs, citizens, and other relevant parties to receive feedback and explore options.

The AFN has reached out to each region to offer support for each Treaty area to sit in ceremony and speak to their knowledge keepers about the potential role of a National Treaty Commissioner. We look forward to receiving the thoughts and findings from across Canada on this important work.

Regionally, our office has undertaken strategic planning with our Executive Chiefs. Our shared vision is that the Alberta Treaty

First Nations are sovereign, healthy, thriving, culturally vibrant and prosperous. Our strategic goals are to build unity and to strengthen advocacy, engagement and communication efforts, governance and leadership development, and the establishment of a regional policy and research sector.

Conclusion:

These are unprecedented times, but our Elders have foretold these events and advised us to be prepared. Our strength comes from our culture, beliefs, and each other. We are stronger together. I know that our continued efforts in working together will help us move forward together.

*Hai Hai, Nanaskomtin,
Regional Chief Marlene Poitras
Assembly of First Nations, Alberta*



"Regional Chief Poitras displays strong leadership in the health portfolio, especially with her strong background in health."

— Chief Irvin Bull



Regional Chief Terry Teegee

British Columbia

Hadih and greetings from beautiful Lheidli T'enneh territory. On behalf of the 204 First Nations in British Columbia (BC) and the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) Board of Directors, I present this Annual Report which provides an update of the ongoing work in our region as well as in my portfolio areas.

Introduction:

It has been over a year since COVID-19 began impacting all our lives. So many of us have suffered the loss of loved ones. Some of us have lost our businesses or livelihoods. Every one of us has felt the worry, sadness and fatigue caused by the pandemic. Yet, we are resilient and strong. We can see the light at the end of tunnel as vaccines begin to roll out. Many of us have learned new ways of doing business that will make our lives easier. Most importantly, we cannot allow COVID-19 to take our focus away from the numerous other crucial issues we face as First Nations leaders.

Regional Key Issues and Activities:

The BC Assembly of First Nations is focused on passing Bill C-15, An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which will implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the federal level. This human rights instrument will help to secure our rights to self-determination, cultural protection, traditional governance, and ownership over our lands. We are not naive. We know that C-15 is not a cure-all for centuries of colonial injustice.

But it is a step in the right direction, and we need to see it passed.

We continue to work with the provincial government to implement the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act focusing on four distinct aspects:

- alignment of laws,
- an action plan,
- agreements, and
- an annual report.

We recently held our Special Chiefs Assembly on March 3 and 4 via an online platform. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly passed 19 Resolutions:

NUMBER	TITLE
01/2021	In Plain Sight Independent Review of Indigenous-Specific Racism In B.C. Health Care
02/2021	First Nations Health Governance Structure Renewal
03/2021	Support for the Intervention in Judicial Review of Federal Decision to Phase out Fish Farms in Discovery Islands
04/2021	Support for FNESC to Develop a BC Specific Model for Capital Funding for First Nation Schools and Teacherages
05/2021	Supporting First Nations Community-Based Climate Leadership



06/2021	Support for the Advancement of First Nations Water Rights	15/2021	Support for the Development of a Memorandum of Cooperation Between the BCAFN and First Nations Business Development Association
07/2021	Advocating for First Nations Engagement, Collaboration and Co-Development of the Canada Water Agency	16/2021	Support for the Development of a BC First Nations Cannabis Strategy
08/2021	Enhancing Bill C-15 Federal Legislation to Implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	17/2021	Property Transfer Tax Exemption for First Nations Entities in British Columbia
09/2021	Need for Immediate Policing Reform and Support for First Nations Jurisdiction of Policing	18/2021	Support for the Okanagan Indian Band in their Fight to Uphold First Nation Jurisdiction and Rights on Reserve
10/2021	Inclusive and Transparent Covid-19 Immunization Planning	19/2021	Support to Advocate for Meaningful Involvement of First Nations in the Restructuring of the Provincial Government's Natural Resource Sector
11/2021	Advancement of First Nations Rights, Values and Principles in Changes to Forest Legislation, Policies and Regulations		
12/2021	Rejection of Métis Assertion of Rights Outlined in the Métis Nation British Columbia Report: A Tale of Two Nations: Highlighting the Inequities of the Treatment of the Métis in BC		
13/2021	Expanding Engagement on the National Action Plan on MMIWG2S		
14/2021	Support for ?esdilagh First Nation and Condemning the Gibraltar Mines Discharge Permit		



Economic Development

BCAFN continues to strongly advocate for First Nations economic development at all scales. At the national level, I act as the Chair of the Chiefs' Committee on Economic Development. This Committee continues to meet to discuss priorities of regional and national importance and to advocate on behalf of First Nations. Currently, COVID-19 economic recovery is the major focus of this table and will continue to take priority. Home in BC, economic recovery is also a



topic of extreme importance. BCAFN has had to pivot to an online platform in order to deliver business forums, with the latest forum held on economic recovery on April 7, 2021. The first online Forum focused on BC First Nations as leaders in the sustainable economy and took place in the Fall of 2020 with a welcome reception and excellent feedback from participants.

In November 2020, the report *Centering First Nations Concepts of Wellbeing: Towards a GDP-Alternative Index* was released. This report highlights the potential for a holistic framework to measure economic activity and wellbeing that is informed by BC First Nations ways of being and rejects using GDP as an all-encompassing metric for measuring the value of an economy.

COVID-19 has changed the way that we do business and broken the status-quo. A window of opportunity exists to reinvent the economy with increased First Nations participation and leadership. BCAFN has developed a strategy to advance economic self-determination over the next 3 years.

Cannabis Legislation and Regulation

Efforts of the Chiefs' Committee on Cannabis to develop a federal First Nations jurisdiction framework were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Committee resumed meeting on October 6 and November 24, 2020 with new momentum to see the required legislative changes through. The Committee is seeking meetings with relevant federal ministers and will be considering legislative options shortly. The AFN is also seeking funding from

ISC to support the concerted effort that will be required to develop and advance this strategy with the federal government. The intention of the Committee is to develop a work plan and strategy to guide meetings and advocacy with the federal government.

Justice

The AFN has moved to strike an AFN Justice and Policing Task Force, which is intended to prioritize and advocate for increased community safety, reforming police services, First Nations jurisdiction, and alternative for police services and the legal system.

I am co-chair of the Justice portfolio along with Quebec-Labrador Regional Chief Ghislain Picard. We are collectively advancing important issues including:

- Implementing the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into federal legislation;
- Working on a bilateral mechanism and legislative framework with the Assembly of First Nations regarding restorative justice;
- Addressing minimum mandatory penalties, conditional sentencing to increase flexibility, and providing resources for community-based initiatives;
- Expanding both the quality and quantity of Gladue Reports;
- Increasing funding to First Nations policing, including acknowledging it as an essential service and not just a program;
- Co-developing new legislation regarding First Nations policing and providing funding for this work to be undertaken; and



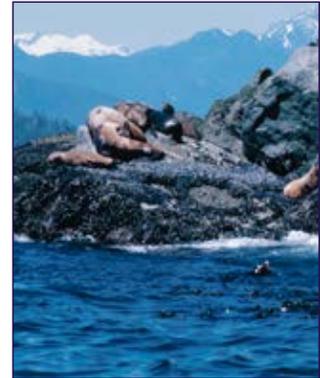
- A Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirited Peoples Action Plan that incorporates policing injustices.

Fisheries

BCAFN advocates for full harvesting rights of fish and salmon stock restoration. 2020 brought to light the lack of rights implementation in Canada as Mi'kmaq fishers exercised their inherent, constitutional and Supreme Court affirmed rights to harvest lobster. Tensions, fueled by anti-Indigenous racism rose to the point of violence, with inadequate intervention on the part of the Crown to uphold the Mi'kmaq's rights. As Co-Chair of the National Fisheries Committee, I implored action on the ground from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and offered open support to the affected Mi'kmaq communities. In the fall, over 100 First Nations in BC came together to call for the removal of open-net pen fish farms in the Discovery Islands due to their harmful impacts to wild salmon stocks and threat to First Nations ways of being. Department of Oceans and Fisheries Minister Jordan announced that the farms would be removed by 2025 and that no licenses will be renewed. Industry has subsequently challenged the order and BCAFN will continue to advocate for the order to stay.

Indigenous Skill and Employment Training Strategies (ISETS) - Human Resource and Development

In 2020-2021, the focus on the First Nations labour market and employment and skills development was to advocate for support for First Nations to cope with the pandemic and to begin to assess resulting advocacy needs. The AFN met with technical-level networks to discuss program issues they were experiencing and how COVID-19 had impacted program delivery and services to First Nations citizens. The feedback was that serious hardships were experienced because of the pandemic. This included impacts to training opportunities, workplace training, operational needs, and training programs and individual plans that had to be paused or became impossible to complete for public health reasons and economic closures. First Nations and their Labour Market Agreement Holders needed to pivot to develop new strategies and redirect



“First Nations’ rights are not frozen in time. We are also pleased that this case (Nuu-chah-nulth) affirms that First Nations have rights to access all fisheries resources, not exclusive from one species to another.” –Fisheries



resources to accommodate the safety needs, new training strategies, virtual learning environments, and much more. Additional funding of \$144M was identified in the federal Fall Economic Statement (2020) to provide extra support.

The Path Ahead/Looking Forward:

As we come out the other side of the third wave of COVID-19, we continue to strive for the implementation and advancement of our inherent Treaty Rights, Title, and interests. This global pandemic has highlighted to everyone what we already knew: there are systemic problems in the relationships between governments and First Nations. BCAFN continues to ensure clear and open communication with the chiefs and leaders and strives to ensure we are working collectively towards the same goals.

Conclusion:

As I have said, we continue to soldier on through the loss and pain. Slowly, we see our work make positive change for our communities. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the BCAFN Board of Directors, Knowledge Keepers, Women's representative and Youth representatives for all their support, energy and effort.

Mussi cho
Regional Chief Terry Teegee

“First Nations seek and expect profound and fundamental transformations within Canadian justice systems, especially in the area of policing. Racial discrimination by the RCMP towards First Nations must end.” –Justice and Racism



Regional Chief Kluane Adamek, Aagé

Yukon

Shiyaa Awoodineiki'

On behalf of the AFN Yukon Region, I acknowledge the Elders, Matriarchs, Veterans, Chiefs, Leaders and Youth from across Yukon who support the work of our office. I also recognize the First Nations across Canada who continue to show strength, courage, and leadership through this challenging year.

Introduction

As the Yukon Region continues to move through the pandemic and as COVID-19 restrictions begin to ease, I reflect on the challenges we have faced over the past year; those loved ones we have lost, and the impacts that isolation has had on the physical and mental health of our people—particularly the youth. Yukon is in the strong position that it is today because of Yukon First Nations communities, Chiefs and leaders who have helped us stay strong together while safely keeping apart. I also recognize the many accomplishments that Yukon First Nations have celebrated this year despite facing such significant social and economic hardships.

Regional Key Issues and Activities

The AFN Yukon Region has continued to build upon the legacy of those who have come before to advance the priorities and objectives of the AFN Yukon Region's Strategic Plan ('A Yukon That Leads'), and to support Yukon First Nations in advancing their priorities nationally. Over the past three years, the AFN Yukon Region has held a

series of Chiefs Summits. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, these Summits have been held successfully both virtually over Zoom or using a hybrid model of in-person and virtual participation, to ensure that Yukon First Nations feel a sense of cohesion, especially in the face of the challenges brought about by the pandemic. Moving past COVID-19, these Chiefs Summits will be important for Yukon First Nations leadership to gather together to build consensus and identify shared priorities and actions for communities to take as we continue to adjust to this new rhythm. In 2021, we have held Chiefs Summits in March and June, and we will hold an additional Chiefs Summit in September before our Annual Summit in the fall.

The AFN Yukon Region has remained focused on taking action in response to climate change and drawing on the values-driven approach of Yukon First Nations in all climate-related work. Early this year, we were proud to launch the first ever Yukon First Nation Climate Action Fellowship in partnership with the Council of Yukon First Nations in order to provide a group of First Nations youth and emerging leaders with the opportunity to discuss and develop climate action approaches that were guided by traditional knowledge and innovation. The AFN Yukon Region also participated in multiple AFN engagements on water policy and long-term water strategy. These conversations brought together leaders and members of Yukon First Nations to hold a water ceremony and have conversations about the sacred importance of water as well as the roles, rights and responsibilities of





First Nations (particularly Matriarchs) in the management of water and water resources.

Recognizing and lifting community leadership remains a focus of the Yukon Region. The social isolation and restrictions of the past year have had serious impacts on the physical and mental health of First Nations people across Canada, the North, and the Yukon. As a result, the Yukon Region has made it a priority to highlight the successes, wisdom and accomplishments of everyday Yukon First Nations people who make important contributions to their communities every day. This year, the second annual AFN Yukon Region Leadership Awards were hosted virtually to acknowledge and celebrate those individuals who live the values of a 'Yukon that Leads.' Thirteen Yukon First Nations citizens were recognized, celebrated, honoured and acknowledged for their incredible efforts and leadership.

Environment and Climate Change

As the AFN National Portfolio holder for Environment and Climate Change, I am committed to advancing climate action solutions that are developed and driven by First Nations through values-based, and rights-based approaches. We continue to work closely with Chiefs-in-Assembly, receiving guidance and direction through AFN's Advisory Committee on Climate Action (ACE) as well as the Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA). The AFN Environment sector has officially launched the National Climate Change survey to First Nations from coast-to-coast-to-coast to help inform the development of a National First Nations Climate Strategy.

Our region is working to implement the Yukon First Nations Climate Emergency

Declarations signed by leadership and youth in February 2020 at the first-ever Climate Action Gathering held in Whitehorse, YT. As part of the efforts to develop a YFN Climate Vision and Action Plan, we have partnered to co-create the Yukon First Nations Climate Action Fellowship which was launched in January 2021. Fourteen youth and emerging leaders aged 18-30 were selected to participate in this diverse 20-month Fellowship which integrates virtual, in-person and on-the-land programming. The Fellowship journey will support and uphold youth as they connect to climate-related challenges, as well as their culture and identity. The program will build skills and knowledge to approach climate solutions from a holistic perspective by integrating a First Nations worldview. The Fellowship will be working alongside Yukon First Nations to co-create a regional Yukon First Nations Climate Strategy for release in Spring 2022.

Modern Treaties

Advancing priorities at the direction of Modern Treaty and Self Government agreement holders, continues to be a priority both regionally and nationally. As we revisit the successes and outcomes of the 2019 National Self-Government and Modern Treaties Forum hosted in Whitehorse by the AFN Yukon Regional Office, we look forward to building upon this momentum and important work of the first Forum, as we plan the goals and objectives of the 2nd Forum. We look forward to bringing together (in-person or virtually) Modern Treaty and Self Governing First Nations, and those who are interested in developing Modern Treaties or Self-Government agreements, from across the North and Canada to discuss innovative solutions to advance self-determination.



Youth

As the Portfolio holder supporting the AFN National Youth Council (AFN-NYC), I have had the privilege of witnessing the strength and leadership that the Youth Council representatives have brought to the National AFN Executive, and to their respective regions. The AFN-NYC continues to be an incredibly important pillar in all our national work, and I want to thank and acknowledge all members, past and present, for their tireless advocacy and commitment to advancing youth interests and the important initiatives that they are all presently undertaking.

The AFN Yukon Region had passed a Resolution declaring 2020-2021 to be the "Year of the Youth." Through partnerships, we have created various avenues to youth to be engaged in the regional work, and to create opportunities to lift up the voices and perspectives of emerging leaders and rising youth within Yukon First Nations and the Yukon Region. The pandemic has placed significant obstacles in the pathways of youth, who have lost out on important opportunities for personal and professional development. The "Year of the Youth" is a way to celebrate youth leadership and provide a platform for young people to take up positions of leadership where their voices can be heard and applied within spaces where policy and decision making takes place. This formal program provides leadership development, facilitation training, program and project building that will all come together by way of an in-person youth gathering in 2022.

AFN Yukon has continued to build a partnership with Bringing Youth Towards Equality (BYTE), a "by youth, for youth" organization in the Yukon. In 2021, we will continue to celebrate the successes of youth and search for ways to provide opportunities for further leaders.

Executive and Management Committee

Through formal education and interest, I continue to work as a contributing member of the AFN Management Committee. My approach to my work on both the AFN Executive and Management Committees is to ensure that my actions follow and adhere to the AFN Code of Conduct for the Executive Committee, and to continue to lead by my values and teachings. It is critical that the AFN advance with formally changing the name of 'National Indian Brotherhood' to truly reflect the people we serve. I am pleased with the AFN Executive supporting a motion to this end, in March 2021. Additionally, we can all look forward to the implementation of AFN AGA Resolution 13/2020, Becoming A Role Model in Ending Sexual Orientation and Gender-Based Discrimination Within the Assembly of First Nations, and that we are advancing the priorities identified in the MMIWG2QS+ National Inquiry— Calls to Justice, in relation to taking urgent and special measures to ensure that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people are represented in governance, and to protect their rights and interests while doing so. Over the past three years, I have continued to push to ensure that our Executive is held to the highest standards of equity, transparency, and fairness.





Regional Chiefs' Reports



The Path Ahead/Looking forward

A Yukon that Leads. Our region has seen some of the highest vaccine uptake rates in the entire country, and this is a result of the tireless leadership of Chiefs and community leaders who have dedicated so much of their time to ensuring all Yukoners and Yukon First Nations have access to safe and accurate information about vaccines. While the pandemic is not over yet, we are all beginning to feel the relief of knowing that our communities and loved ones are being protected from this virus and that we are on our way to being together in person again. I look forward to attending meetings in person and sharing more frequent visits with Yukon First Nations citizens and Chiefs. I look forward to continuing to support the hard work being done by First Nations people across the Yukon and Canada!

Conclusion

Once again, I would like to thank the Elders, Matriarchs, Chiefs and Youth, who have led us through this very challenging year. The AFN Yukon Region remains committed to collaborating closely with leadership in the territory and across the country in support of all First Nations communities and people!

May we continue to lift each other up, and lead from a place of values. Gunalchéesh.

"In the spirit of 'A Yukon that Leads,' the Climate Fellows truly embody what it means to lead from a place of values, and traditional teachings."



Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya

Northwest Territories

On behalf of the Dene Nation and First Nations of the Northwest Territories, I'd like to extend my regards to my colleagues. As our organization continues the work to uphold and protect the rights and interests of the Dene Nation, know that your tireless efforts to advance our collective interests are recognized.

Introduction

My priorities as Dene National Chief and NWT AFN Regional Chief have not changed since my 2018 election. My work continues to unify the Dene and improve our working relationships among our territorial, federal and Indigenous government partners. My platform, like many of yours, was tested over the last year due to the hurdles introduced by COVID-19. Nonetheless, we have succeeded against all odds. As I reflect on 2020, I am proud to say that our organization worked hard to restructure the Dene way of communication, organization and planning, which resulted in many successful initiatives and presented opportunities for growth.

Regional Key Issues and Activities

Today, I am pleased to share our progress and achievements over the past year. The Dene Nation continues to be a champion for First Nations in the North, where we have made significant strides towards bettering our collective wellbeing, despite the unforeseen challenges caused by COVID-19. We are continuing to work with our partners at all levels to realize our shared goals of equity and equality. However, as we reflect

and celebrate our accomplishments as a Nation, it's equally important to look forward: more work is needed to achieve long-lasting change for the Dene.

As we do look forward, it's important to reflect our traditions within our futures. This past year, the Dene Nation was instrumental in petitioning the federal government to invest in On-the-Land program funding as part of the COVID-19 response to reconnect our people with their past, while providing a safe distance from the growing pandemic. As a result, the federal funding combined with the closing of schools created an unparalleled opportunity for families and their children to learn to live on the land.

Success stories such as these come from partnerships. This is why the Dene Nation has also been the lead proponent on the formation of the NWT Council of Leaders. The Council will be composed of Indigenous leaders and the Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) to deal with issues of common interest. These issues include: COVID-19 and its impacts, Governance at the Territorial Level, Water, Energy, Climate Change, Housing, Education, Health, and Rebuilding the NWT Economy Post-Pandemic.

As the pandemic begins to wind down, it allows us to plan for our recovery. This crisis has highlighted the deep inequalities faced by our communities, and I am determined to strengthen our position by holding the





Regional Chiefs' Reports



Government of Canada accountable to their reconciliation promises and mandates. In regard to economic recovery, the federal government mandated departments to include input from local, provincial, territorial and Indigenous partners on its development. Hence why the Dene Nation authored the position paper “Resetting the Sail.”

As we continue to advance our work within our traditional territories for our lands and resources, it is equally important that we advance the work to pursue our traditional governance structures that have been dismantled by colonial objectives. We know that the current system is ripe for change: this is a chance for Canada to right history’s wrongs. It is within this mindset and the platform I was elected on, that the Dene Nation began the process of rebuilding, reimagining, and self-determining our traditional governance structures through the Constitutional Reform Commission (CRC). This effort will focus on unity, reconciliation, and updating the Dene Corporate Constitution and By-Laws, which were enhanced through regional roundtable discussions across the territory and for which we will be seeking ratification at our next regional Assembly.

As we begin to work through our own governing practices, it has been equally important to improve the practices of the government we work most closely with—the Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT). While our relationship continues to improve, especially through the creation of the NWT Council of Leaders, the legislature can always be improved to suit our needs in a way that is reflective of a government-to-government relationship, and not one that is

embedded in paternalism. Due to devolution, the GNWT is the first agency to receive federal money before distributing the rest. Therefore, the Dene Nation has been active in redirecting federal funding to Dene communities, directly. We will continue to press this issue to ensure it is a permanent change, in order to secure predictable and sustainable funding so programming in the communities can reach their full potential.

On the Land and Community Supports (COVID-19)

The Dene Nation was proud of our successful advocacy to direct federal funds for Dene and fellow Indigenous Peoples across the NWT to return to the land as the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the globe, offering a safe way to socially distance, while revitalizing our cultural traditions. Because of our advocacy, Prime Minister Trudeau publicly acknowledged the dedication of the Dene Nation to uphold our traditional knowledge and culture through our collective efforts. In addition to our successful On-the-Land programming, the Dene Nation also partnered with the Mastercard Foundation, Food Banks Canada, True North Aid, and northern transportation companies to distribute salmon, flour, and Chromebooks to Dene communities and schools to support the people’s education and physical wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indian Residential Schools - Call to Action 46

In June 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) called upon Canadian institutions to work together in a deeper commitment for reconciliation and



justice for Residential School Survivors. One of the recommendations provided by the Commission was for the parties involved to sign a “Covenant of Reconciliation” (Call to Action 46). In our tradition, a covenant means making a sacred promise to each other with the Creator.

We worked through the process of creating the sacred Covenant of Reconciliation through discussions with Indigenous Peoples, churches, and the federal government. The latest draft of the Covenant of Reconciliation is currently being reviewed by the Department of Justice, where we await Canada to return their comments. Our aim is to further Call to Action 46 through regional dialogue that includes translation in Dene languages.

Our promise to each other, to Residential School Survivors, and their descendants, is to travel down a path of healing and reconciliation for a better future for all generations to come.

CWA/Water Rights

The Dene Nation’s approach to water co-governance and co-design means defining

the goals, mandates and programs of the Canada Water Agency (CWA) as a collective. Furthermore, we seek to oversee the plan’s implementation to continue building strong institutions together. In order to meet this goal, the Dene Nation will work together with GNWT to coordinate decisions that affect transboundary Dene lands and waters, ensure that Dene knowledge is in water decision-making and management, recognize and support creating Dene water institutions in the territory, help create or strengthen existing collaborative basin or watershed boards, develop watershed/river basin level planning, and collaborate with other governments to improve the Mackenzie River Basin Board (MRBB).

Dene Education

In July of 2020, we held our virtual Dene Education Summit, where local leaders, educators and youth developed the Dene Education Strategy “Two Worldviews: One Vision.” This plan aims to reconsider, rebuild and refine the NWT’s education system through collaboration and unity. It will also embrace the Indigenous ways of knowing of our learners, while empowering their future preparedness through academic rigor.



This development comes as a result of a previous report from the Auditor General of Canada. The document found, among other concerns, that the NWT government was struggling to give a fair education to students in smaller, more remote communities. To address this, the summit participants outlined a list of priorities that need immediate attention:

- Building an education system developed, governed and staffed by Dene;
- Increasing the number of Dene educators and administrators supported by informed non-Indigenous school staff;
- Establishing a legal framework and legislated processes to create an alternative school system for NWT Indigenous communities; Supplying full resources and funding for community-operated and regional schools;
- Providing mental wellness teachings and support at all levels; Incorporating strong career planning components at all levels; and,
- Ensuring a holistic education system that reflects Indigenous histories, cultures, languages of the people.

To date, the Dene Nation is seeking funding from Indigenous Services Canada to set up the strategy's implementation and success. The money will be used to finalize the Vision document for public release, develop a plan with staffing requirements to move the plan forward and set up the Chiefs Committee on Education to oversee the process.

Indian Day Schools Claims Assistance Program

As it stands today, the Indian Day Schools Claims Assistance program is hindered by delays in the administrative procedures and lack of resources invested in developing the capacity to process a higher-than-expected amount of claims.

The confusing and drawn-out application process makes it harder for people to use this important program. The current system is so inefficient that the applicants usually end up having a high percentage of errors on their forms. These issues were preventable, had the program been finalized by Argyle Communications and provided to communities to aid in capacity development.

Despite my efforts, this task was inactive by those charged to implement it for nine months into a 2.5-year process and remains incomplete. Predictably, this delay resulted in the Dene Nation and other First Nations across Canada being left without the capacity required to send their claims properly.

Moreover, the claimants rarely receive updates about the status of their applications, causing undue hardship in the process. Survivors and their communities deserve access to their fair compensation in a timely manner. Overall, this system needs to work more efficiently and faster.



Additionally, more resources need to be invested to correct this wrongdoing and to prevent similar problems down the road.

As of writing, progress is still underway to resolve these issues.

Path Ahead/Looking forward

Last year was a time of great trials and challenges, but it also presented us with new opportunities and showed us the best way to move forward. As the National Chief of the Dene Nation and Regional Chief of the NWT, I am proud of our peoples' strength, empathy, resilience, but most of all, unity. In 2020, we stood closer together than ever before, and now we reap the rewards of our efforts. Today, we celebrate more community investments, strengthened government-to-government relationships, and enhanced governance. That being said, my work as a leader is still not done and I look to another term as Regional Chief of the Northwest Territories.

Conclusion

As we walk down the path of shared understanding and reconciliation, it's important to remember that we can do great things together. I will not stop in my journey to unite the Dene and amplify our voices as well as build better relationships within the GNWT, Canada and each other.

*Mahsi Cho,
Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya,
Northwest Territories
National Chief of the Dene Nation*



“As our organization continues the work to uphold and protect the rights and interests of the Dene Nation, know that your tireless efforts to advance our collective interests are also recognized.”





Council Reports





Knowledge Keepers Council

Assembly of First Nations Knowledge Keepers Council have a long history and very busy year. Since the launch of the National Indian Brotherhood and evolution to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), it has always been recognized what a valuable and very rich history and contribution our Elders and Knowledge Keepers have within our political framework and life. There has always been a place of honour and distinction for Elders that is apparent within the Charter of the Assembly of First Nations. The AFN Knowledge Keepers Council have always strived to provide the best spiritual and political guidance since the formation of the organization, its structures, and its Charter.

The Council has helped to shape AFN policies and the rapport with the federal government and other national and international organizations. Over the last 39 years the AFN's leadership has relied upon the historical, spiritual, and cultural knowledge of the Council and its representatives. The Council has had a long and resilient history of helping guide the direction of the AFN, especially during the critical times and matters relating to Treaty rights and First Nations governance.

To this day the Council continues to play an important role in all facets of the AFN and its operations. The Council which is chaired by New Brunswick/Prince Edward Island representative Eldon Bernard includes representatives from each of AFN's 10 regions.

The Knowledge Keepers are British Columbia representative Dr. Gwendolyn Point,

Skowkale First Nation; Yukon representative Charles Hume, Champagne and Aishihik First Nation; Northwest Territories representative John Bekale, Gameti; Alberta representative Bruce Starlight, Tsuu'tina Nation; Saskatchewan representative Joseph Quewezance; Manitoba representative Ernie Danies, Long Plain First Nation; Ontario representative Edmond Sakaney, Fort Albany First Nation; Quebec/Labrador representative William Sunday, Akwesasne Reserve; and Nova Scotia/Newfoundland representative Phyllis Googoo, Waycobah First Nation.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The Council continued to meet bi-annually at AFN Annual General Assembly and AFN Special Chiefs Assembly to discuss issues and challenges facing the Council and to bring together new ideas. However, this year due to the COVID-19 Pandemic they have had to use Virtual tools to maintain contact and contribute on an ongoing basis.

They are guides to our leadership and coming leaders. They have always spoken with honour and with a great deal of pride. The Council will always encourage First Nations leaders and champions to continue to enlighten and inform forums such as the Chiefs Assemblies on their experiences, issues, successes, and challenges. The Council has always been essential to our day-to-day business; they keep our traditions, values, languages, and history at the forefront. It is all our responsibility to ensure prosperity and the safety of the youth, just as our ancestors did for us. The Council continues to engage, and help other



elders within their regions, they share information, and ensure everyone knows what the messages are at the community level and on a national basis.

This year the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) developed and delivered to Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) a draft “Indigenous Knowledge Systems Framework” in October 2020. This “evergreen” document was reviewed and discussed by the AFN Knowledge Keepers Council on March 11, 12, 2021. The Knowledge Keepers Council met jointly with officials at ECCC to share their perspectives and more specifically provide feedback on a draft “ECCC Knowledge Systems Framework” currently under development and review by ECCC.

Some of the points highlighted included the legacy of broken treaties and promises, oppression, racism, discrimination, how Indigenous Knowledge will be used and how Indigenous Knowledge will be protected.

- Protection of sacred knowledge.
- Respecting laws that have prevailed in our cultures for a long time should be recognized in an Indigenous Rights context.
- The need to understand First Nations Indigenous perspectives of nations and people and regional differences because it reflects their unique beliefs, values, and identify; demonstrates that Indigenous Peoples have a world view and a way of considering knowledge; but the framework in no way signals any relinquishment of Treaty or inherent rights.

On March 29, 2021, a second joint meeting was convened. At this session, the Knowledge Keepers Council shared additional perspectives and insights on the draft ECCC framework and discussed next steps; how to ensure effective implementation of the framework and potential hurdles that will stand in the way of success.

Throughout the year the Council continued to develop their Terms of Reference (TOR) and participated in the AFN’s Charter Renewal. They have also participated in various Chief’s committees in advisory and providing elder services.

First Nations continue to revitalize traditions and ceremonies through gatherings; the Council continues to advocate that First Nations traditions, languages, and ceremonies are shared and kept alive as it is the foundation to building stronger Nations.

The Council addressed COVID-19 and delivered a message urging people to stay home and to self-isolate. The Council advised people should they return to their Ancestral lands to social distance themselves.

Also, earlier in the year the Knowledge Keepers released a statement and very direct assessment to Canada on the long-standing fishing disputes and harassment taking place in Atlantic Canada, “First Nations Fisherman’s rights are not being respected.”





The Council continues to meet via Zoom and teleconference calls meetings updating keeping each other apprised of key activities in their respective regions and to contribute to the overall efforts of the AFN staff, Executive Committee and First Nations.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The AFN will continue to support the efforts of the Knowledge Keepers/Elders Council. It is essential that First Nations cultures and perspectives are reflected in the work conducted regionally and nationally, and to fully integrate the input and participation of the Council into all work.
- The Council will continue to provide guidance to the AFN Executive Committee, staff and support the activities of the now Quad - Council.
- The Council will continue to provide guidance and vision to AFN Quad - Council meetings with the Women's, Youth and Veterans Councils.
- The Council continues to meet on Council protocol, roles, and responsibilities.



AFN Women's Council

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Women's Council's purpose is to unify and create healthy, happy, and harmonious nations through cultural identity and cultural teachings based on respect, love, courage, wisdom, honesty, humility, and truth. The AFN Women's Council also establishes a gender-balanced perspective within First Nations, and within all entities dealing with First Nations, that honours the rights and aspirations of First Nations women.

The objective of the Women's Council is to ensure that the concerns and perspectives of First Nations women inform the work of the AFN. Specifically, AFN Women's Council Members fulfill their portfolio responsibilities and participate in a wide range of panels, presentations and forums that are relevant to First Nations women and the issues that affect them.

The AFN Women's Council provides direction on important policy initiatives including the development and implementation of a *First Nations National Framework Action Plan*, advocacy for redress for First Nations victims of forced/coerced sterilization, human trafficking, gender-based analysis (GBA+), and the economic empowerment and prosperity of First Nations women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The AFN Executive Committee Portfolio holder for the AFN Women's Council participated in the Federal, Provincial and Territorial meeting of Ministers of Status of Women held virtually on January 15, 2021.

This is the fourth time that the Ministers of Status of Women have invited the AFN Women's Council to participate in this meeting and it provided an excellent opportunity to discuss priority issues and opportunities to build partnerships. The agenda for the meeting included discussions of AFN priority areas such as the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report's *Calls for Justice*, the development of a National Action Plan to end violence against First Nations women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, as well as the role of Indigenous women in the post COVID-19 pandemic economic recovery.

The AFN Women's Council also completed work on a draft report entitled *First Nations Women's Economic Security and Prosperity*, which will be finalized in September 2021. The draft report examines the many barriers that First Nations women encounter in relation to obtaining higher levels of education, establishing themselves as successful entrepreneurs, and finding employment in management or executive positions. The 2021 Final Report will include a Comprehensive Strategic Framework for action to advance socio-economic issues and to increase the participation of First Nations women in First Nations governance across Canada.





First Nations MMIWG2S+ National Action Plan

Throughout the spring and summer of 2021, the AFN Women's Council is hosting a series of regional engagement sessions to gather input and update the First Nations Action Plan to End Violence Against First Nations Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People. This is a First Nations-led process that is designed using a families-first and trauma informed approach. The regional engagement is intended to produce regional reports or regional action plans that will explore the unique circumstances, perspectives, and regional-led work that is occurring in priority areas. This work is mandated by AFN Resolution 67/2019, *Development and Implementation of a National Action Plan on Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA*.

On June 3, 2021, the AFN released a First Nations National Framework in response to the 231 Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). The First Nations National Framework is entitled *"Breathing Life into the Calls for Justice: An Action Plan to End Violence Against First Nations Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+*

People" was developed with direct input from First Nations survivors of gender-based violence and families of missing or murdered loved ones. The First Nations National Framework contains action items of national scope devoted to supporting families and survivors, a framework for prevention, and a framework for healing. It also contains action items targeted to the four theme areas from the 231 *Calls for Justice* which are Culture as Safety, Health and Wellness, Human Security and Justice.

The First Nations National Framework will contribute to the federal government's MMIWG National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and will be a driving force in the implementation of the 231 *Calls for Justice*. The First Nations National Framework is just one part of the First Nations response to the National Inquiry's 231 *Calls for Justice* providing a national lens to the identified actions. The framework report will also include regional priority and action plans developed based upon ongoing regional engagement. As each regional report is completed, it will be added to this First Nations National Framework as complementary components to help advocate for implementation.



Next Steps - Moving Forward

The AFN Women's Council will continue to advocate for the establishment of gender-balanced perspectives that honour the rights and aspirations of First Nations women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people within First Nations communities, and within all entities dealing with First Nations. Looking ahead to 2021 and 2022, the AFN Women's Council anticipates that much of its work will be devoted to advocating for the implementation of the National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people and the First Nations National Framework.



National Youth Council

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Youth Council (NYC) is united in exercising their inherent rights and strives to influence the direction of the AFN through promoting intersectional equality. The NYC works with all levels of leadership to create opportunities for personal development and empowerment for future generations.

The NYC is a key organ of the AFN, as established in the AFN Charter, and represents First Nations youth across the country on issues that impact them on a daily basis. The NYC acts as an advisory body to the AFN Chiefs Committees, AFN Secretariat, and the AFN Executive Committee on various youth-related and non-youth-related issues.

The NYC operates as a 20-member council of First Nations youth from each of the 10 AFN regions. Each region appoints one male and one female representative through their regional process. The Council elects two co-chairs and two executives each year at the Annual General Assembly (AGA). The NYC 2020-2021 Co-chairs are Rosalie Labillois-Wysote and Cedric Gray-Lehoux. Ashley Daniels is the 2020-2021 Executive Member.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The NYC members are involved in various AFN files. Each youth member holds a portfolio to stay up to date on their assigned sector's work. NYC members continue to update the Council on their portfolios at both the Annual General and Special Chiefs' Assemblies and through virtual meetings.

AFN Secretariat and Executive Committee

The NYC continues to participate in and advise various AFN Sector Chiefs' Committees, working groups, and forums coordinated by the AFN Secretariat. This year, the NYC have prioritized building awareness and sharing information regarding Bill C-15, *An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and on COVID-19 vaccine uptake.

Strategic Plan 2020-2022

Every two years, the NYC updates their strategic plan which guides their focus and work. The strategic plan for 2020-2022 identifies the following priority areas:

- **Increase AFN-NYC Network:** The NYC seeks to increase its' network through the expansion of geographical and demographic engagement and outreach to other national youth councils to amplify Indigenous youth voices.
- **Strengthen Online Presence:** The NYC plans to strengthen its' reputation and visibility through increased online presence to connect and inspire youth across Turtle Island and form partnerships with key-stakeholders.
- **Capacity & Team-Building:** The NYC prioritizes increasing capacity among council members through professional development activities to ensure they are effectively performing their job duties, alongside planning for the next future of incoming NYC members.
- **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Education:** The NYC will focus on information sharing



and provide Indigenous youth with the tools and resources necessary to increase their knowledge and engagement on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Bill C-15, *An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

- **Quarterly Meetings & Internal Priorities:** The NYC continues to establish collaborative mechanisms to address developing issues and priorities through meetings and communication; this includes updating the NYC Terms of Reference, electing new co-chairs and executive members annually, and assigning portfolios.

AFN Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope

In March 2021, members of the NYC attended the *Raised Voices: From Hope to Action* virtual youth forum on First Nations education. Over the course of three days the youth group (Carriers of Hope) created innovative tools for promoting activities for advancing their Youth Calls to Action on First Nations Education. These tools were presented to the NYC, government, policymakers, and leaders at all levels in education. The NYC committed to

supporting this work and promoting future collaboration with the Carriers of Hope.

COVID-19

NYC members are undertaking work in their communities to assist during the pandemic by communicating national updates to the youth in their regions and by promoting learning and communication materials regarding COVID-19. The NYC attends COVID-19-related AFN Chiefs Committees and working groups.

At the national level, members of the NYC have participated in an AFN public service announcement video that focused on the important role that First Nations youth play in keeping communities safe from COVID-19. This video was a way to share information and spread awareness on the importance of getting vaccinated.

External Engagements

Youth Vaccine Uptake: Members of the NYC are engaged in an Indigenous Services Canada-led (First Nations Inuit Health Branch) Sub-Working Group on Youth Vaccine Uptake. The working group is made up of First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners,



as well as provinces and territories. The purpose of this group is to bring youth together to discuss outreach to other youth and barriers to vaccination and how to address them while also hearing from young people on the existing messaging surrounding vaccination.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UN Declaration):

The NYC participated in the Department of Justice's youth-focused engagement session regarding developing legislation for implementing the UN Declaration. The engagement session hosted over 100 participants including Ministers, Truth and Reconciliation commissioners, Members of Parliament, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth, and non-Indigenous youth. The final youth recommendations call on the Government of Canada to co-develop with Indigenous youth by creating space for them to lead on issues impacting them.

Youth Advisory Circle: Members of the NYC are now participating in an Indigenous Youth Advisory Circle at the Communications Branch at Justice Canada. Members of the NYC, along with other national youth councils, will advise and help shape a public awareness campaign by collaborating in a promotional video to highlight youth perspectives on the UN Declaration.

The State of Youth Report: The NYC met virtually with Heritage Canada to discuss the impacts, challenges and barriers related to COVID-19 and expressed how they have adapted and want to move forward post-pandemic. The NYC expanded on the lack of access to leadership opportunities in their

community and importance of being engaged by leadership at the local, band, and federal levels.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The NYC, in the 2021-2022 year, will continue to:

- Collaborate with the AFN Knowledge Keepers Council, Women's Council, and Veterans Council;
- Advance priorities listed in the 2021-2022 AFN-NYC Strategic Plan;
- Work to maintain a visible and substantial presence within the activities, meetings, and conferences of the AFN Secretariat and its various AFN committees and working groups, including being responsible for an AFN Secretariat file;
- Support the *AFN Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope* youth advocacy group in amplifying their *Calls to Action on First Nations Education*;
- Engage and report back to the NYC on involvement in internal and external committees and working groups; and
- The NYC will meet virtually in July 2021, where they will elect their new Executive Members and Co-Chairs.



First Nations Veterans of Canada

Overview

The First Nations Veterans Council (FNVC) assists and provides support to First Nations Veterans, families, and communities. The FNVC consists of First Nations Veterans who provide a voice to the concerns raised by the many Veterans who have suffered from trauma in service and its impacts on families and communities over generations.

The FNVC has always held a place of recognition within the organization since the development of the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) and eventual transition to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). The FNVC helped shape the development of the NIB/AFN by providing guidance and direction that continues to this day. The pivotal role that the FNVC plays within the AFN was confirmed by way of resolution by the Chiefs-in-Assembly during the 2020 AFN Annual General Assembly

The FNVC is now officially recognized as a council within the structure of AFN, along with the Knowledge Keepers, Women's and Youth Councils. The newly formed Quad Council meets quarterly to share common approaches and strategies to best support their individual council objectives. The FNVC is supported by the AFN executive through the portfolio holder, Northwest Territories Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya. Appointments to the FNVC are made through a regional nomination process. Each region is represented by a Veteran that participates in the work of the Council to ensure regional needs are recognized and addressed.

First Nations Veterans Representatives by Region

The FNVC members include AFN portfolio holder, Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya; Ontario representative, Veteran Tom Bressette; Urban representative, Veteran James Eagle; Yukon representative, Northern Ranger Charles Hume; Manitoba representative, Veteran-Chief Christian Sinclair; Saskatchewan representative, Veteran Emile Highway; Alberta representative, Veteran Henry Raine; New Brunswick/PEI representative, Veteran Eldon Bernard and Chief Terry Richardson; Northwest Territories representative, Veteran Tim O'Loan; and AFN Veterans' technician, Larry Whiteduck.

The National Veterans Spokesperson for the FNVC council is Veteran and former Chief Percy Joe. The positions in the Quebec and Nova Scotia regions are currently vacant.

New activity and work ahead

The FNVC is working towards the planning and development of policies which will have a positive impact on Veterans, families and communities at large. In January of 2021, the FNVC had the opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the Minister of Veterans Affairs for the first time in many years. The meeting resulted in a proposed Letter of Understanding between Veterans Affairs Canada and the First Nations Veterans Council that would look at addressing four main pillars for initial discussion:





1) **The establishment of a record of all First Nations soldiers and Veterans** who have fought in all major world conflicts including, World Wars I and II, the Korean War, recent-day conflicts in Afghanistan and Canada's U.N. peace-keeping efforts worldwide. This record would include undocumented First Nations veterans who fought in pre- and post-Confederation conflicts on behalf of the Dominion of Canada.

2) **Assessment of current outreach activities in place within Veterans Affairs Canada.** It is crucial to ensure that activities reach the intended Veterans recipients, families, and First Nations communities. This includes understanding the unique needs of post-service trauma and ensuring Veterans and their families are made aware of the current health, housing, and memorial services that are potentially accessible and available.

3) **Creation of a resource person position within Veterans Affairs Canada** to act as a liaison and a Veteran's resource person that will facilitate and help address the needs and concerns of First Nations soldiers, past and present.

4) **Commemoration activities:** ensuring First Nations soldiers will be included in commemoration activities internationally. The FNVC would propose to undertake a unique pilgrimage and ceremony that would honour fallen soldiers who gave their lives on foreign battlefields.

Previous meetings, events, and new working relationships.

The FNVC has hosted six conference call meetings, as the pandemic has eliminated any in-person meetings for the time being. First Nations Veterans have participated in 5 international commemoration activities including:

- Veteran Thomas Bressette – Vimy Ridge
- Veteran Percy Joe – Dieppe
- Veteran Luc Obomsawin – Passchendaele
- Veteran Eldon Bernard – Dieppe
- Veteran Henry Raine – Juno Beach
- Northern Ranger Charles Hume – Italian Campaign
- Netherlands 2020 – Postponed – COVID-19 Pandemic

Pre-pandemic meetings included a joint meeting with the Saskatchewan First Nation Veterans in Calgary, Alberta on March 27-29, 2019. During this meeting, the following was established:

- Planning, identifying and coordination of First Nations Veterans participation in international ceremonies;
- First Nations Veterans working sessions to plan key priorities and activities; and
- The establishment of working relationships with:
 1. National Veterans organizations, such as the Veterans Ombudsman
 2. Dominion Command – The Legion group
 3. Veterans Emergency Transition Services (VETS)
 4. Veterans Affairs Canada
 5. Respect Canada



Next Steps – Moving Forward

The AFN will continue to:

- support the efforts of the newly formed Veterans Council;
- work towards ensuring all perspectives are reflected in the work conducted regionally and nationally; and
- fully integrate the input and participation of the FNVC in AFN Assemblies

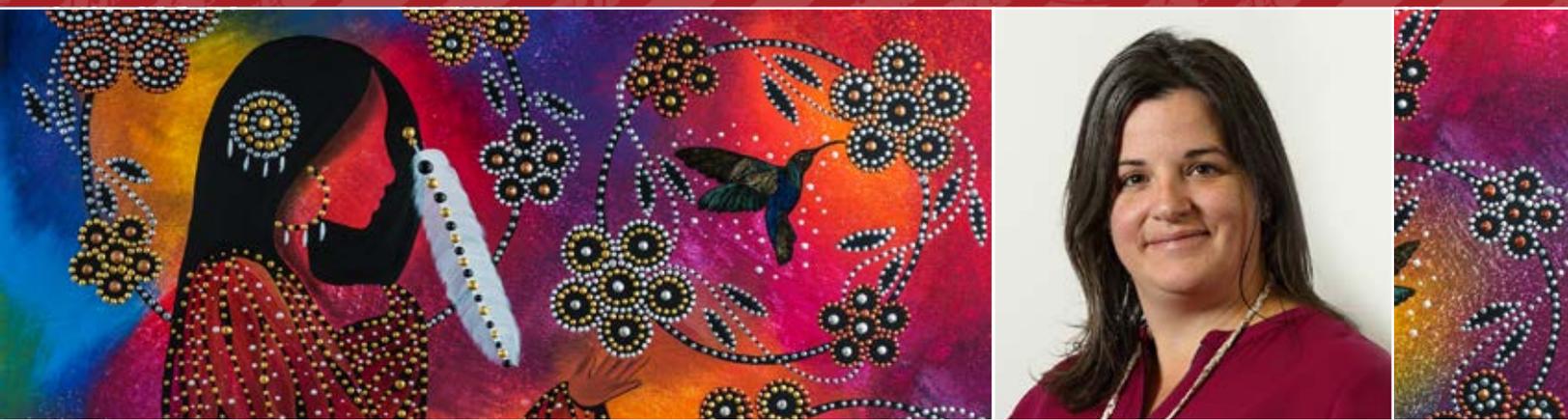
The FNVC will continue to:

- provide guidance to the AFN Executive Committee and staff;
- partner with the Knowledge Keepers, Women's, and Youth Councils; and
- maintain collaboration efforts as a full Quad council, focusing on the advancement of their collective strategic plans.

The FNVC will continue to advance and advocate for better communication on behalf of Veterans, families, and communities. The flow of information to all Veterans, including those who are residing in rural areas, needs to be improved to ensure that all Veterans are informed of new developments.



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS



ClO Report



Chief Executive Officer

Aaniin, Pjil'asi, OKI, Kwe kwe, Boozhoo, Tan'si, Gilakas'la, She:kon

To say that my first full year as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) was an unusual one would be an understatement. However, in spite of the many hurdles we had to overcome, I am most impressed by how well First Nations and the AFN have risen to the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last spring, First Nations governments took swift and immediate action to protect their members throughout the pandemic, closing borders, implementing curfews, and limiting travel, all of which contributed to significantly lower infection rates among First Nations people. As the second and third waves hit and the numbers rose, First Nations leadership across the country showed the strength of their management and the depth of their commitment to their people in limiting the spread of the pandemic and reducing its harmful effects. While we mourn the loss of family and friends, provide treatment to those who are struggling through the healing process, and continue to protect as many as possible from becoming infected, we also must acknowledge the enormous efforts First Nations have already made and continue to make in protecting our most vulnerable members from even greater harm. This is a real attestation of your leadership.

In my report last year, I detailed the work of the AFN COVID-19 National Task Force. This work continues and I wish to thank all of those involved for their tremendous support to First Nations. It is crucial that First Nations are a central part of the recovery

process and the unprecedented investment of \$18 billion for Indigenous priorities in the recent federal budget will help to ensure that is the case.

Despite our growing fatigue and frustrations with the pandemic, it is so important, now more than ever, to remain vigilant. As more First Nations people receive their vaccinations, we can all begin to see a light at the end of the tunnel, providing hope for an end to lockdowns— that we will one day be able to meet in assembly face to face once again. In the meantime, it is essential that we all continue to wear our masks, practice diligent hand washing or sanitizing, and follow physical distancing protocols. Our actions today will help keep our communities, neighbours, and loved ones safe.

At the AFN, we have adapted to working remotely and continue to achieve results for First Nations through our advocacy. It remains our highest priority to protect and promote First Nations inherent and Treaty rights now and in the future. I am beyond proud of the work the AFN staff has achieved and continues to achieve. This Annual Report details the many accomplishments made and the efforts the AFN continues to make on behalf of First Nations.

Among the many achievements this year, I would like to highlight the successful launch of operational restructuring of the AFN Secretariat. This initiative is the result of two years of collaboration, discussion, and the continued commitment to achieve the goals set out by you through resolutions.



Those goals include promise of a better environment to the next seven generations, the protection and promotion of inherent and Treaty rights, title and jurisdiction, and supporting First Nations fiscal capacity to exercise those rights, titles and jurisdictions.

Reorganizing will allow the AFN to work more efficiently and effectively to better realize these defining commitments. In order to achieve our mandates, the reorganization of the AFN Secretariat allows for increased flexibility and better planning and coordination of the complex work that is currently being undertaken by the organization. The defining feature of the restructuring is the addition of new Vice-President (VP) and Senior Director (SD) positions that head newly classified branches of the AFN. The VP of Operations and Administration oversees Human Resources, Finance, and Information Management and

Information Technologies. The VP of Strategic Policy Integration oversees four new branches: Social, Rights and Justice, Economic Development and Infrastructure, and Environment, Lands and Water. This new leadership team is working towards the goal of better coordinating operations and policy development teams, allowing for improved productivity and efficient flow of work. A key part of the coordination process is the creation of six new internal working groups focused on operations and administration, research and statistics, the federal budget, AFN engagements, First Nations' rights, and international Indigenous issues.

Though we again are unable to host the Annual General Assembly (AGA) in person this year, I am thrilled that we have found a way to come together on a virtual platform. This AGA will build on lessons learned from our December 2020 meeting, which was the





CEO Report

first of its kind for many of us. I am deeply thankful for all those who are working so hard behind the scenes and on your screens. It is my hope that this virtual AGA can create a sense of belonging and community for attending First Nations leaders, members, and guests alike. Together, we will continue the advocacy efforts of the AFN to ensure that First Nations' interests, goals, and rights are upheld and respected.

It is an honour to continue to serve the Chiefs and First Nations. With your continued commitment, cooperation, and leadership, the AFN will continue to progress on its mandates to improve the lives of all First Nations people. I am grateful to continue my tenure as CEO for such an admirable and dedicated organization.

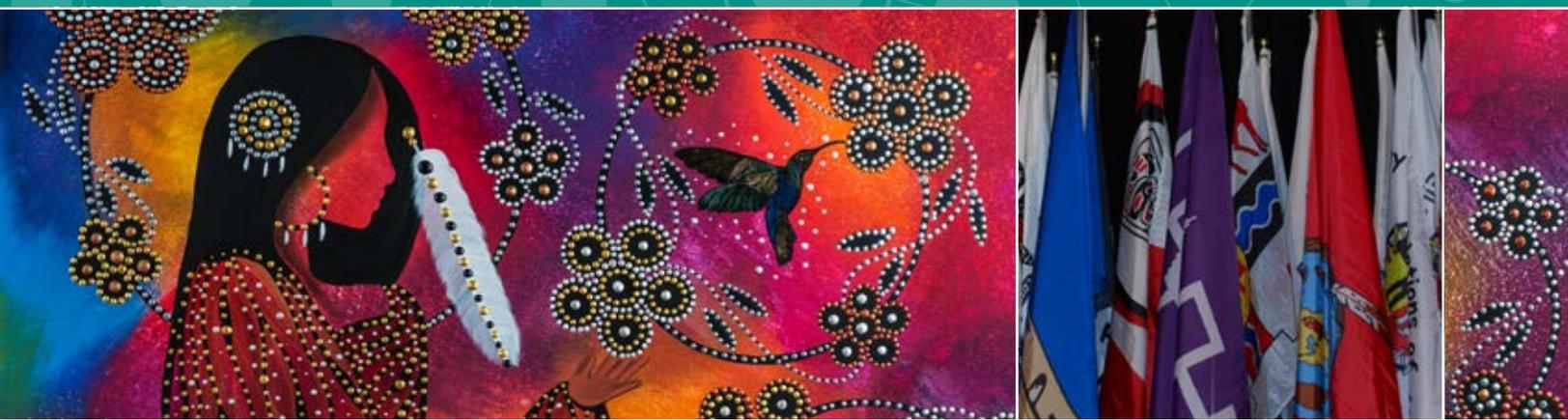
We will continue to work through this pandemic, and I am confident that we will emerge stronger together. I hope that you and your loved ones are in good health, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

I look forward to joining you all on-screen at the AGA and in-person when it is safe for our Nations to gather once more.

Wela'liog, Miigwetch, Nia:wen, Mahsi'Cho, Hiy Hiy, Guneshcheesh, Howa'a, Kinanaskomitin,

Janice Ciavaglia
Chief Executive Officer





Strategic Policy Integration



Strategic Policy Integration

The Strategic Policy Integration Unit (SPI) provides corporate support through the management of the resolutions process, research, horizontal policy issues, initiatives and processes. The unit supports the AFN's participation in processes such as the AFN-Canada Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities, the Council of the Federation and other intergovernmental fora. These meetings provide opportunities to advocate for First Nations inherent and Treaty Rights, title and jurisdiction. Through work on parliamentary relations, SPI provides timely monitoring of legislative priorities to advance the interests of First Nations. The AFN seeks increased funding for First Nations governments to support improved implementation of First Nations rights, title and jurisdiction through work on The New Fiscal Relationship. In addition to this important work, the unit also oversees four working groups: Research and Statistics, Budget, International and the Rights Working Group.

The New Fiscal Relationship

Funding transfers do not keep pace with inflation or the needs of First Nations, who are the fastest growing population in the country. This forces our governments to try and do more and more with less and less. The result is a growing gap in the quality of life between First Nations people and Canada. This is the driver behind the SPI's work to establish a new fiscal relationship between First Nations and Canada.

On June 10, 2019, the Joint Advisory Committee on Fiscal Relations (JACFR) submitted its Interim Report for Engagement, Honouring our Ancestors by

Trailblazing a Path to the Future, to the National Chief of the AFN and the Minister of Indigenous Services (ISC). The report was also the subject of a dialogue session at the Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Fredericton, New Brunswick on July 21, 2019, and was provided in kits to all delegates at the AGA. Resolution 24/2019, passed during this Assembly, calls on members of the JACFR, the AFN and ISC to engage extensively with First Nations about this interim report and report back to Chiefs at a subsequent AGA.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The New Fiscal Relationship Transfer (10-Year Grant)

One hundred and sixteen (116) First Nations are now receiving the New Fiscal Relationship (NFR) Transfer (the 10-year grant) with additional First Nations anticipated to opt in for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. The NFR Transfer is an alternative to contribution agreements for transferring funds between Canada and First Nations that:

- Ensures a predictable funding horizon over ten years, a longer term than other funding mechanisms offered by Indigenous Services Canada. Any unspent funds can be carried forward into the next fiscal year and all funds received under the NFR Transfer can be applied to the priorities set by the First Nation. This will help First Nations plan their own futures and apply funding to their greatest needs or priorities.
- Increases First Nations control and freedom to design and deliver services by



eliminating program terms and conditions, recipient audits, and compliance reviews, as set and conducted by Canada.

- Decreases the reporting burden on First Nations governments, with 92% less data provided to Canada than the current requirements under contribution agreements.

For the 2022/23 fiscal year, First Nations who are not currently participating in the NFR Transfer will be invited to express their interest to participate by completing the process to assess eligibility for the NFR Transfer.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

As a result of AFN advocacy, Budget 2021 committed to \$2.7 billion over 10 years to escalate funding associated with the NFR Transfer, which is based on inflation and the population of each participating First Nation.

Work on the New Fiscal Relationship has continued through the advancement of Resolution 24/2019. Although engagement has been hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic, the AFN and ISC continue to seek opportunities to engage on the JACFR report.

Working Groups

Research

The AFN has had success in developing partnerships with academic institutions and non-governmental organizations to develop research initiatives that support AFN's advocacy. The AFN continues to advance the First Nations principles of OCAP® (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession)

while working closely with the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC).

Key Activities and Accomplishments

A snapshot: Status First Nations people in Canada, created with Statistics Canada, provides key statistics to support advocacy efforts. With technical support from FNIGC, the AFN regularly dialogues with Indigenous Services Canada and Statistics Canada at the Table on First Nations Data (TFND) to advance data sovereignty and to improve access to timely, high-quality statistical information.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The recently established AFN Research and Statistics Working Group is developing the AFN Research Strategy and Research Guidelines. These guidelines will outline the coordinated actions required to improve how research can advance First Nations priorities.

Budget

The AFN participates in the government's yearly financial plan that sets out taxation and spending priorities, the federal budget process. Through several annual opportunities, the AFN provides input into the process in order to advocate for sufficient, predictable and sustainable funding for First Nations that supports implementation of inherent and Treaty rights, title and jurisdiction.

The AFN Budget Working Group seeks to build off successful budget advocacy initiatives and identify opportunities for coordinated approaches to data, research



Strategic Policy Integration



and advocacy that would result in the fulfillment of obtaining sufficient, predictable and sustainable funding for First Nations.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The AFN Budget Working Group undertook an analysis of the \$18 billion identified for Indigenous priorities in the 2021 Federal Budget, identifying gaps in funding areas for First Nations such as housing, infrastructure and support for First Nations governments. Through AFN advocacy, spending for Indigenous priorities has totaled more than \$45 billion in the last six budget cycles.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The AFN Budget Working Group is preparing for participation in the 2022 Federal Budget Cycle. The Working Group will work to address and analyze sufficiency and gaps in federal funding for First Nations in order to close the socio-economic gaps and allow First Nations to fully exercise their right to self-determination.

Rights

The protection and promotion of First Nations rights is a central value and mission of the AFN. The Treaty and inherent Rights of First Nations remain at the core of both the AFN and its Charter. While recognizing the diversity of First Nations, the AFN continues to work towards the affirmation, assertion, and advancement of First Nations rights, title, and jurisdiction through coordinating approaches, messaging, resources and dialogue.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The AFN Rights Working Group (RWG) was created to support advocacy efforts for First Nations rights. The RWG also reviews and assists in the development of any proposed legislation or regulations including in the legislative drafting or amendment process, the drafting of Memoranda to Cabinet or Treasury Board Submissions, providing support for committee appearances, and other tasks that support the AFN in the affirmation, assertion, and advancement of First Nations rights, title, and jurisdiction.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The RWG is currently working to plan for the AFN’s near-term legislative and policy priorities considering Government of Canada and First Nations development processes and will provide support accordingly.

International

The AFN has consistently participated in international fora and draws upon international law and initiatives to inform resolutions and national and international advocacy. First Nations international participation remains an important tool for the assertion of rights, the promotion of First Nations jurisdiction and authority, and acting in the global interests of First Nations and their citizens.



Key Activities and Accomplishments

The AFN International Working Group (IWG) supports the strategic goals of the organization by assisting in the development of international advocacy strategies and internal/external coordination in all matters, reinforcing the principles of First Nations sovereignty and self-determination.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The IWG will develop a strategic workplan to identify opportunities for increased coordination or participation at high priority international fora to strengthen and advance AFN's advocacy goals.

Resolutions

Resolutions are the essential mechanism by which First Nations provide specific mandates and direction to the AFN. SPI, through its leadership on the Resolutions Committee, manages the resolutions process that effectively fosters and captures national consensus on significant policy matters.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The Resolutions Committee manages all administrative aspects of the resolutions process from the time resolutions are first submitted in draft format until they are finalized and posted on the AFN website. SPI also manages the Resolutions Updates, which provides detail on actions taken to implement resolutions.

Parliamentary Relations

SPI conducts parliamentary monitoring and supports advocacy efforts in Parliament. In the current Parliament, the AFN has had representatives appear in the House Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, the House Standing Committee on Finance, the House Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, the House Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security and the Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples. These committee appearances included advocacy on addressing systemic racism in policing, legislation implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and legislation creating a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, while also seeking financial and social supports for First Nations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, among others.

SPI provides both a Daily Parliamentary Preview to support the work of the secretariat and a weekly update for distribution among regional offices regarding legislative and governmental developments as well as key committee meetings. SPI also participates regularly in regional briefings providing key updates on parliamentary, legislative, and governmental developments.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Continue this work and share the information within the secretariat and regional offices.
- Continue to support parliamentary advocacy such as appearances in House of Commons and Senate committees.





The AFN-Canada Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities

Canada and the AFN continue to engage under the permanent bilateral mechanism (PBM) through the AFN-Canada Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities (MOU) in order to advance key joint priority items. Regular meetings at the Leadership and Senior Leadership level are the main function of the PBM, with regular joint work conducted by AFN secretariat and Government of Canada staff to realize work outlined in joint priorities.

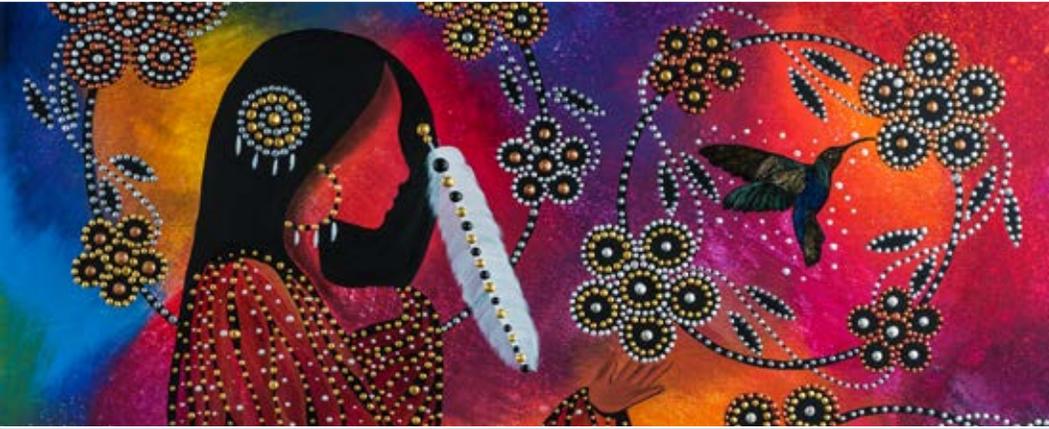
Key Activities and Accomplishments

On February 28, 2020, a Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) was held. The meeting reflected on the progress made and steps for the future on a number of joint priority files including:

- Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Supporting the development of a National Action Plan to implement the recommendations of The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- Working towards the development of distinctions-based health legislation and legislation for First Nations Policing as an essential service.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Coordinate a second Senior Official's Meeting in 2021 with potential discussion topics including updates on progress of joint priority items and planning for a Leaders Meeting.
- Coordinate a Leaders' Meeting chaired by the National Chief and Prime Minister.



Branch Reports



Social Branch

The aim of the Social Branch is to advance the overall vision, mission, and strategic outcomes of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) by focusing on social programs delivered by First Nations governments to their citizens or by the Government of Canada to First Nations. The Branch aims to increase recognition of First Nations jurisdiction over these issues while improving the quality of program and service delivery.

The Branch is composed of four sectors and a special COVID Task Team, each mandated by their own set of resolutions. These sectors are Health; Languages and Learning; Housing and Homelessness; and Social Development.

Health Sector

The AFN Health Sector is mandated to protect, maintain, promote, support and advocate for First Nations inherent, Treaty, and international legal rights towards ensuring the (w)holistic health and well-being of First Nations. This is achieved through policy analysis, communications, and, most importantly, advocacy on behalf of, and in support of First Nations communities and individuals. A central goal of the AFN Health team is First Nations' control of the development and delivery of all health services and programs.

In 2020/2021, the AFN Health Sector continued to advocate for a long-term vision of First Nations control of First Nations health systems with sustainable and adequate investments that result in better health outcomes. The health sector also supported the efforts of the AFN COVID-19 Task Force in its advocacy efforts.

Accomplishments 2020-2021

Chiefs Committee on Health & First Nations Health Technicians Network

The Chiefs Committee on Health (CCOH) and the National First Nations Health Technicians Network (NFNHTN) have been in existence, pursuant to resolutions passed by Chiefs-in-Assembly, since the mid-1990s. The Chiefs Committee has developed a strategic plan as part of the ongoing response to AFN Resolution 04/2017, *Maximizing the Reach and Responsiveness of the AFN Health Sector*. The strategy is a collaborative effort between the Chiefs Committee on Health (CCOH), the National First Nations Health Technicians Network (NFNHTN) and the AFN national secretariat's Health Sector. During the process, the CCOH and the NFNHTN also revised their respective Terms of Reference. Ratification was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Non-Insured Health Benefits

The Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program is consistently identified as an irritant for First Nations and a high priority area for AFN advocacy and transformation. The AFN continues to make progress in addressing AFN Resolution 56/2012, which called for a moratorium on cuts to the NIHB program until such time as the AFN and First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) can conduct a joint review of NIHB in order to articulate shortcomings and identify potential efficiencies.

AFN work on NIHB has centered on the AFN-FNIHB NIHB Joint Review called for in AFN Resolution 56/2012. The established



objectives of the Joint Review are to enhance client access to benefits, identify and address gaps in benefits, streamline service delivery to be more responsive to client needs, and increase program efficiencies. The Joint Review is guided by the Joint Review Steering Committee (JRSC), made up of equal representation of First Nations and FNIHB staff including two Indigenous Services Canada Deputy Ministers.

The AFN also continues to advocate for the National Navigators Network, comprised of NIHB Client Navigators from across the country. The aim is to create a supportive network that allows for the sharing of best practices in order to aid the Navigators in helping clients' access NIHB services.

Mental Wellness

The AFN Mental Wellness Committee (MWC) was established in April 2010 and guides this work with technical expertise and knowledge of the national, regional and community level issues. The committee meets twice a year, participates in monthly teleconferences and develops the strategic direction.

The AFN, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB), and Indigenous mental health leaders developed the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum (FNMWC) Framework, launched in January 2015, which includes a mental wellness service continuum and outlines opportunities to strengthen existing mental wellness programming for First Nations communities. The establishment of the FNMWC Implementation Team has been a key component to implementation of the framework from a social determinant of

health approach and is an important step in supporting AFN Resolution 22/2014, *Support for the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum*. This file includes the following other priority areas: (a) Life Promotion, (b) Substance Use, and (c) Intergenerational Trauma and Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Supports Program (IRS RHSP).

Life Promotion

The Health Sector is working in partnership with Thunderbird Partnership Foundation and First Peoples Wellness Circle on a national strategy on life promotion and suicide prevention. This work will take a phased approach that includes working with partners on a scoping review that would identify suicide prevention strategies in regions, gathering a table of experts to synthesize/discuss main elements of a national strategy and operationalize definitions of life promotion and suicide prevention in First Nations, and working with partners on the creation of a National Strategy on Life Promotion and Suicide Prevention.

Substance Misuse

First Nations have been dealing with various concerns of substance misuse, most recently opioids and methamphetamines. The *Honouring Our Strengths: A Renewed Framework to Address Substance Use Issues Among First Nations Peoples in Canada* (otherwise known as the HOS Renewal Framework) is a document that is meant to outline a continuum of care to strengthen community, regional, and national responses to substance use issues. With guidance from the AFN's Mental Wellness Committee,





implementing the HOS Renewal Framework would provide First Nations a proactive approach in addressing their needs on substance misuse.

Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program (IRS RHSP)

As a result of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), the IRS RHSP is meant to provide Survivors and their families, mental health and cultural support. Released on September 30, 2020, the *Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program Continuation Report* called on the federal government to continue funding the RHSP that has seen the number of Survivors accessing the program steadily increase. Advocating for the permanency of the RHSP is a priority for 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Seven Generations Continuum Of Care

AFN Resolution 19/2019 lays a foundation for the development of a model of service delivery that will facilitate First Nations in supporting an individual throughout their life span and calls on the AFN to advocate for the development of a continuum of health and health-related supports and services, instead of a program-by-program approach. A continuum of care foundation will provide a vision and a way forward to improved health and wellness for First Nations people across the country. This will facilitate the ability of First Nations to address long-standing and growing gaps for continuing care and to ensure health, social, and economic wellbeing for First Nations people as they age and as their care needs change.

Public Health

The AFN participates in, and provides policy analysis and advice for diverse dialogues, consultation processes and strategy development sessions, including the Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections (STBBI) Framework, TB Elimination in First Nations Communities, and the Health Indicators Framework.

The AFN National Public Health Experts Advisory Committee (NPHEAC), established as mandated by AFN Resolution 04/2012, continues to provide technical expertise and knowledge to the Public Health portfolio. NPHEAC determines a First Nations response to emerging public health issues such as COVID-19, vaping, while also discussing the application of a public health lens on the continuum of care approach, and meeting with the Chief Public Health Officers table.

The AFN collaborates with various national organizations on areas of relevance to public health including, but not limited to, the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH), the National Collaborating Centre for Infectious Diseases, the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA), and the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN). Through partnerships with other national organizations the AFN works to ensure the ongoing inclusion of First Nations in the development of strategies that aim to improve the health and wellbeing of First Nations people.

The AFN is a member of the Health Data Technical Working Group (HDTWG) and participates in information sharing on various health data initiatives occurring



across the country. Initiatives discussed at the HDTWG table include: the Health Indicator Framework project, updating the Community Based Reporting Template (CBRT), regional surveillance initiatives, and access to the CIRNA Indian Registry System (IRS).

Family Wellness

The AFN continues to advocate for First Nations women, men, and children's health issues and ensure their perspectives from prenatal, midwifery, Early Learning and Child Care, Jordan's Principle to end of life are reflected in a fulsome Continuum of Care. The Health Sector supports the AFN Social Branch in the areas of Jordan's Principle, Food Security and Early Learning & Childcare (ELCC). External partnerships are also maintained with organizations such as the Canadian Pediatric Society (CPS) and the National Aboriginal Council of Midwives (NACM).

Accessibility/Disabilities

Several AFN resolutions provide mandates on accessibility/disability, including AFN Resolution 98/2017, *Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation*, which directs the AFN to work with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to develop distinct First Nations accessibility legislation by First Nations, for First Nations. The AFN's efforts to strengthen engagement with First Nations persons with disabilities (FNPWD), First Nations leadership, administrators, delivery and service providers and others, continues. This included outreach through the distribution of several reports and surveys and professionally broadcasted interactive/accessible webinars, along with

widespread use of social media. Several national interactive workshops on accessibility and disability rights and inclusion were coordinated with climate action, infrastructure, health, housing, and Jordan's Principle, among others. On March 30, 2021, a virtual discussion was held with First Nations Knowledge Keepers and FNPWD to dialogue on ways and means to change the foreign lexicon and labels of mainstream "disability" language to more culturally safe concepts and strength-based approaches found in First Nations languages/worldview that empowers persons of all Abilities and First Nations governments.

Food Security

The COVID-19 Pandemic further exposed the inadequate food systems and lack of food security in First Nations communities. Maintaining communications with First Nations regarding COVID-19 information and providing updates was a priority, as well as advocating to the federal government for the need for greater resources directly to First Nations. AFN continues to prepare and share communications materials pertaining to the advancement on issues of food insecurity and food sovereignty and seeks funding opportunities for First Nations.





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The AFN COVID-19 National Task Force

The AFN Executive Committee established the AFN COVID-19 National Task Force (C-19 Task Force) by way of a motion at a duly convened meeting on April 21, 2020 to ensure the unique needs of First Nations are addressed during the global pandemic.

The overall objective of the C-19 Task Force is to engage in dialogue with experts, leadership, and First Nations to provide recommended actions that will support the mitigation of impacts of COVID-19. The C-19 Task Force is not a decision-making body, but rather assists in providing credible and useful information to the AFN Executive Committee. This information supports their efforts to inform First Nations in their region about the current developments and announcements regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and advocate for increased support and resourcing. To support their efforts, working groups were established in priority areas of pandemic planning, reopening (which later joined into one group entitled response and recovery) and data.

Accomplishments 2020-2021:

The C-19 Task Force has developed a discussion paper that outlines systemic barriers that have contributed to First Nations vulnerabilities to COVID-19, emphasizes challenges that have arisen during the pandemic and highlights key actions and investments that are needed to support the ongoing pandemic response, the recovery and to protect against future pandemics and emergencies. In support of this work, the Pandemic Plan and Reopening Working Groups developed a survey to hear feedback from First Nations on their

experiences responding the COVID-19 pandemic to date.

The Data Working Group has focused on developing a position paper to highlight the need for data and information governance as shown by the COVID-19 experience and supporting the position of the First Nations Information Governance Centre's "First Nations Data Governance Strategy."

The AFN has worked to produce public health communications material with messaging from the AFN Youth Council, Knowledge Keepers Council and First Nation Women Leaders on COVID-19, as well as numerous fact sheets and infographics on the vaccines, public health messages and mental wellness.

More broadly, the National Chief and Regional Chiefs have voiced concerns and raised issues related to COVID-19 and the vaccine roll-out through media appearances, interviews and advocacy letters to federal, provincial and territorial leaders. The AFN sits on numerous working groups with federal government partners providing an opportunity for consistent input into discussions related to the COVID-19 response, vaccine prioritization and the vaccine roll-out. Through these efforts, First Nations concerns have been brought forward and First Nations have not been forgotten. While there has been funding made available to support First Nations throughout the pandemic, they are insufficient to address the gaps that remain and the work to push for increased resourcing and involvement in decision making processes must continue.



Languages and Learning Sector

As of April 1, 2021, the Language and Culture Sector, Education Sector, and the Human Resource Development file has been amalgamated to create the Languages and Learning Sector which will focus on K-12 education, post-secondary education, language revitalization, and labour market training. The Languages and Learning Sector will continue to be supported by the Technical Committee on Languages (TCOL), the Chiefs Committee on Languages (CCOL), the National Indian Education Council (NIEC), the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE), First Nation Technical Working Group on Human Resource Development, and CCHRD. This report focuses on the activities of the separate sectors from fiscal year 2020-2021.

The Language and Culture Sector focused on advocacy for the revitalization of First Nations languages and the new Languages and Learning Sector will continue to focus on the full implementation of the federal Indigenous Languages Act, guided by resolutions, including AFN Resolution 77/2017, *Support for continued co-development work on the Indigenous Languages Act*.

The Education Sector focused on advocacy for predictable, sustainable, and equitable funding for First Nations elementary and secondary education, and post-secondary education. First Nations students have the Inherent and Treaty right to receive education that is in accordance with their culture, values, traditions, and languages and that is free of prejudice and discrimination. Quality and culturally appropriate education is a cornerstone to the preservation and

vitality of First Nations societies and to the realization of other fundamental human rights of First Nations students. The Education Sector is guided by AFN Resolution 65/2017 *New Interim Funding Approach for First Nation Education*, AFN Resolution 35/2019 *Additional Funding for First Nations Elementary and Secondary Education*, AFN Resolution 21/20 *First Nations-Led Local, Regional and Treaty-based Post-Secondary Education Models*, and AFN Resolution 34/2019 *First Nations Education Infrastructure Review*.

The Chiefs Committee on Human Resource Development (CCHRD) is mandated to provide leadership on human resources development matters. This includes the First Nations Labour Market Strategy (FNLMS) which is now part of the Employment and Social Development Canada's (ESDC) Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program. AFN Resolution 25/2018, *Next Steps on a Distinct First Nations Labour Market Strategy*, directed the CCHRD to call on the Government of Canada to work with First Nations on a new approach for human capital development centered on a government-to-government relationship that recognizes First Nations jurisdiction and authority to govern and provide services. AFN Resolution 25/2018 stated that the 2018 federal budget offered much needed incremental investments but did not account for inflation and population increases. The AFN continues work that is focused on devolution of the jurisdiction and authority to govern First Nations labour market programming, and research that will support





indexed investments to respond to impacts of inflation and population growth.

Accomplishments 2020-2021

Languages

In 2019-20, the Sector, in cooperation with the TCOL, had prepared and printed a guide for First Nations Rightsholders, language experts and language entities (organizations) that are starting, or are already involved in, Indigenous-led language revitalization activities. In 2020-21, the Sector mailed the guide (*A Guide to An Act respecting Indigenous languages: A Tool for First Nations Language Revitalization*) to First Nations and language entities. While supplies last, the Sector will mail a free copy of the guide to interested First Nations, First Nations-led organizations and individuals.

The Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages (OCIL) was established in October 2020. The Minister of Canadian Heritage convened consultation sessions to obtain advice about desirable qualifications and characteristics for the Commissioner and Directors of OCIL, and about how to meet the *Indigenous Languages Act* objective of providing adequate, sustainable and long-term funding for the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening of Indigenous languages. Working with the TCOL, the Sector provided advice and guidance regarding:

- the regional consultation sessions, including informing First Nations, and 2021 Indigenous Languages Symposium;
- First Nations' interests in the development of the accountability profiles for the OCIL Commissioner and Director positions;

- ensuring, through sustained advocacy, First Nations representation in the establishment of the Selection Committee for the Governor in Council appointment of the Commissioner and Directors; and
- the establishment of a First Nations Review Committee for recommending uses of the scarce funding for regional revitalization proposals.

The appointment of the first Commissioner and three Directors of Indigenous Languages were announced on June 14, 2021; Ronald E. Ignace, Commissioner, and Directors Joan Greyeyes, Georgina Liberty, and Robert Watt.

There are still gaps in our knowledge about the organizations currently working to revitalize First Nations languages. The gaps include the identities of organizations and entities that are working to revitalize languages, the particular services that they are providing, and the First Nations languages they are revitalizing. In 2020-21, the Sector prepared a list of known entities and, in cooperation with the TCOL, developed a questionnaire for surveying the organizations. The survey is scheduled to begin in May 2021. Also in 2020-21, the Sector launched short-term research projects to:

- gather data about federal, provincial and territorial language legislation and policies; and
- understand how teaching and learning First Nations languages may differ in various types of communities (e.g., reserves, small villages and towns, and large urban areas).



The Sector organized and convened a youth gathering about First Nations languages in the late Fall of 2020. The event was called "Spirit Speakers: Our Languages, Our Future." A report from the youth gathering was released and is available on the AFN Languages webpage. See <https://www.afn.ca/21-03-12-spirit-speakers-recommendations-report-eng/>.

The Sector also produced the following documents, which are available on the AFN webpage.

- a Toolkit for Regional Partners – First Nations Languages and Revitalization; and
- a Social Media Toolkit – First Nations Language Education and Revitalization.

K-12 Education Transformation

In March 2021, INDSight Consulting completed their final report on the *High-Cost Special Education Review*. The Review consisted of research and engagement with First Nations and presents the background and a landscape of the delivery of the High-Cost Special Education Program (HCSEP) in most regions, elements that influence the HCSEP including costing, as

well as draft recommendations for its improvement. The final report presents 13 areas for recommendations, including but not limited to:

- First Nations services and finance teams develop needs-based funding models which would be fully funded by Canada;
- Maintain the separate protected proposal-based fund for HCSE students;
- Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) fund infrastructure and operational requirements, including emergency preparedness for HCSE students;
- Examine the proxy rate for professional training and development;
- Provide funding and services for a 12-month academic year instead of the current fiscal to cover summer supports; and
- First Nations and ISC undertake an examination of HCSE supports being provided under Jordan's Principle in order to obtain an accurate understanding of the total funding required for the HCSEP.

In September 2020, the Sector released five promotional videos during the week of Orange Shirt Day to raise awareness about the importance of the Carriers of Hope Calls



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to *Action on First Nations Education (Calls to Action)*. In addition, the Carriers of Hope developed a *How-To-Guide* that outlines a series of actions that can be taken by First Nations and non-First Nations students, teachers, schools, and leadership to advance and implement each of the five *Calls to Action*.

In March 2021, the Sector hosted the *Raised Voices: From Hope to Action* virtual youth forum on First Nations education. Over the course of three days the Carriers of Hope created innovative tools for promoting activities within the *How-to-Guide*. On Monday, March 29, 2021, the Carriers of Hope presented multimedia products to government, policy makers and all levels of leaders in education.

The Sector hosted over 260 delegates during the AFN Virtual Symposium: *Reclaiming and Reimagining First Nations Education* on March 3rd and 4th, 2021. The symposium was an opportunity for leaders in the education sector to hear key updates at a national level, to hear from keynote speakers on innovative and creative practices in education, and to engage in dialogue on the future of First Nations education. Videos from the Symposium are available at: http://events.afn.ca/info/EDU_RRFNE/956042b4-d9d6-4381-96d4-79689ff7fca3

Post-Secondary Education

In December 2020, AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly passed AFN Resolution 21/2020, *First Nations-led local, regional and Treaty-based Post-Secondary Education Models*. The AFN has been working collaboratively with the NIEC, CCOE and Indigenous Services Canada in creating a preliminary draft of a policy proposal overview.

In 2020, the Post-Secondary Partnership Program (PSP) was regionalized under the mandate of AFN Resolution 48/2018, *First Nations Post-Secondary Education Policy Proposal* to further promote First Nations control of First Nations education.

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020-2021, \$65 million was allocated to the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) to support First Nations students and \$25.9 million was allocated to provide immediate support to Indigenous post-secondary institutions.

Education Infrastructure

On March 25, 2021, the CCOE provided a recommendation to finalize the co-developed School Space Accommodation Standards (SSAS). It is anticipated that these changes will be published and implemented in May 2021. Policy changes to the SSAS may include additional space for language and culture, knowledge keeper and counselling spaces, increased space for libraries, and classroom size recommendations.

First Nations Engineering Services Ltd. was contracted to provide a 15-year capital needs assessment for First Nations schools and teacherages. It was determined by the report that the overall capital costs required for schools is \$5 billion and \$1.2 billion for teacherages over a 15-year period. In response to these numbers, budget advocacy continues to be a top priority for education infrastructure. To accompany the Capital Needs Assessment, the Sector is currently conducting research for operational and maintenance needs of First Nations educational infrastructure.



Human Resource Development

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the workforce and on the operations and functions of the First Nations Labour Market Agreement holders. In the November 2020 Fall Economic Statement, the federal government announced \$144.2 million for the ISET Program. It will be important to continue to support the needs of the First Nations labour market and to monitor the impacts of the pandemic.

The AFN continues to seek the guidance of the CCHRD and the advice of the First Nations Technical Working Group (TWG) on Human Resources Development and the Sub-TWG. The AFN will continue to work with ESDC to identify joint areas of policy collaboration and seek audience with the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion.

Housing and Homelessness Sector

The Housing and Homelessness Sector advocates for improved community well-being by implementing housing and homelessness political mandates and initiatives. The Sector strives to secure broad recognition of and respect for First Nations housing and homelessness rights and jurisdiction while working to improve related policies and programs, obtaining the investments required to meet First Nations housing needs and eliminating homelessness.

Accomplishments 2020-2021

Housing

The diversion of attention due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the negative impacts of overcrowded houses, the restructuring of the AFN administration, the reduction of 100 Section 95 houses from 2020-21 to 2021-22, and the working from home arrangement created the backdrop against which important progress on the First Nations' long-term housing goals was made in 2020 and early 2021. The highlights are:

- the 2021 Federal Budget providing \$6 billion for First Nations infrastructure over four years, including housing;
- the \$1 billion Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) prioritizing "Indigenous" on- and off-reserve projects to house the homeless;
- the \$1.5 billion 'phase two' of the RHI to roll out in 2021;
- additional 2020 federal investments to create more shelters;
- a presentation to Chiefs at the December 2020 Annual General Assembly of the results of the national First Nations housing survey;
- completion of an Implementation Plan for the Ten Year National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy (the Strategy);
- completion of a report studying the feasibility of the creation of a National First Nations Housing & Related Infrastructure Policy & Research Centre;
- an AFN 2021 pre-budget submission seeking \$4.3 billion for First Nations housing as a down payment toward the full implementation of the Strategy; and
- an improved AFN housing website.





The National Chief played a pivotal role in advocating for immediate additional funds for housing, transformative change in the Federal First Nations housing policy and matching long-term investments in First Nations housing. For example, he addressed two Parliamentary committees in April and May 2020 on the effects of overcrowded houses on the spread of COVID-19. The collective advocacy efforts from the National Chief, regional leaders, Chiefs and AFN staff influenced the April 19, 2021, Federal announcement of \$6 billion, a record amount for First Nations infrastructure/housing.

The optional transfer of housing services to the control of First Nations is a major element of the transformative change in Federal First Nations housing policy that has already started. With the support of the AFN, several regions continue their discussions with Canada toward that transfer of control.

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) informed the AFN in April 2021 that it wants engagement of all First Nations across Canada to identify the gap in critical infrastructure, including housing. ISC officials assure the AFN that the upcoming infrastructure engagement process will not delay major Federal Government housing decisions. The AFN therefore continues to work towards contributing to federal processes to support this work through a Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) and a matching Federal Budget submission to implement the Strategy.

Through a Joint Working Group, with the participation of regional First Nations housing technicians, the AFN is jointly developing the approach for First Nations

care control and management of housing with Indigenous Services Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Employment and Social Development Canada.

Homelessness

There is an urgent need to address homelessness for First Nations people both on and off-reserve, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to 2019, the AFN had no mandate to advocate for First Nations homelessness although it had undertaken work on various related social determinants. Since AFN Resolution 79/2019, *Action Plan for First Nations Homelessness On and Off-Reserve*, was passed in December 2019, it has guided the AFN's work to improve the delivery of federal government programs as well as the related social and fiscal mechanisms to address homelessness for First Nations people.

In 2020, the AFN, in collaboration with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), secured funding to lead the work required to address its homelessness mandate. In October 2020, the AFN and ESDC established a Joint Technical Working Group to co-develop the First Nations distinctions-based funding stream of *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy*, as well as to plan research and engagement that will inform the development of a national *Action Plan for First Nations Homelessness On and Off-Reserve*. This action plan will help programs and services better address the needs of First Nations homeless populations living within or away from their communities.



This year, the AFN commissioned three research projects: a systematic literature review, an environmental scan, and a systems mapping of existing programs and services across Canada, to better understand and identify opportunities to address First Nations homelessness. The AFN has also completed preliminary discussions with regional housing technicians and is planning a series of regional engagement sessions to seek input from First Nations leadership and technicians across Canada.

Social Development

The Social Development Sector is responsible for advocacy pertaining to First Nations control and jurisdiction over social development programs and policies across the life course. The sector advocates for First Nations control, jurisdiction, and capacity as the foundation for holistic, sustainable, inclusive, and culturally based systemic reform, as directed by First Nations. Priorities in the Sector include First Nations Child and Family Services reform, implementation of the Indigenous child and family well-being legislation, Jordan's Principle, Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care, First Nations Income Assistance, Poverty Reduction, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Accomplishments 2020-2021

Child and Family Services

AFN Resolution 16/2019, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families—Transition and Implementation Planning*, established the Chiefs Committee on Child and Family Services and Self-

determination (Chiefs Committee), in order to provide input, oversight and guidance on the implementation of *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* (the Act). Advocacy by the Chiefs Committee led to the signing of the Protocol regarding *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* in relation to the Assembly of First Nations (the Protocol), between the AFN and Canada, on July 7, 2020. The Protocol is a mechanism to ensure First Nations lead the development of principles and processes related to the Act. Through the Protocol, the Joint National Working Group on Legislative Implementation of the Act in relation to First Nations (JNWG) was established as a forum for joint work between the AFN and Canada. The JNWG held its first meeting on January 15, 2021, and has had two meetings since, during which the key priorities of the group and a workplan were established. Meetings have also continued at the National Advisory Committee (NAC) and the Consultation Committee on Child Welfare (CCCW) to discuss the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) work and ongoing First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Program reform.

The Sector also held a series of five virtual gatherings to build awareness and facilitate conversations about the Act. Another significant accomplishment of the advocacy by the Chiefs Committee resulted in a moratorium on youth aging out of care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Budget 2021 solidified this commitment further, proposing to permanently ensure that First Nations youth who reach the age of majority continue to receive the supports that they need for up to two additional years.





The 2020 Economic and Fiscal Snapshot Budget 2021 also proposed further investments in the FNCFS Program, for the implementation of the CHRT Orders, and for implementation and capacity building in relation to the Act, stemming from continued advocacy by the AFN and the Chiefs Committee. Furthermore, the Sector has been involved in mediation of the class action lawsuit against Canada on behalf of First Nations children who were wrongfully placed in out-of-home care, which will involve the reform of the FNCFS Program.

Jordan's Principle

Several AFN Resolutions provide the First Nations vision for Jordan's Principle implementation, including AFN Resolution 62/2016, *Full and Proper Implementation of the historic Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decisions in the provision for child welfare services and Jordan's Principle*, AFN Resolution 40/2017, *Call on Canada to Comply with the 2016 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Orders*, and AFN Resolution 27/2018, *Support for the long-term implementation of Jordan's Principle*.

The AFN has continued to advocate for First Nations children to receive the services and supports they need without delay, denial or disruption, no matter where they live or Indian Act status. The Sector advocates for a vision of First Nations determination over Jordan's Principle implementation and advocates for the full and proper implementation of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) orders in relation to Jordan's Principle through the Jordan's Principle Action Table, Jordan's Principle Operations Committee, the Consultation

Committee on Child Welfare, and regular bilateral engagement with federal departments.

In July and November 2020, the CHRT issued rulings to expand Jordan's Principle eligibility to include all First Nations children. Canada has since filed a judicial review of this ruling. However, First Nations children remain eligible for consideration while the review is underway. Under the expanded eligibility, First Nations children meeting any of the following criteria are eligible for consideration under Jordan's Principle:

- First Nations children registered (or eligible to be registered) under the Indian Act, whether they live on- or off-reserve. This includes all children who will become eligible for Indian Act status under Bill S-3 implementation.
- First Nations children who have one parent/guardian who has or is eligible for Indian Act status, whether they live on- or off-reserve.
- First Nations children recognized as a citizen/member by their First Nation, regardless of Indian Act status eligibility, whether they live on- or off-reserve.
- First Nations children who ordinarily reside on-reserve.

To improve communication and collaboration on Jordan's Principle and to share innovative practices emerging from First Nations, the Sector hosted a virtual gathering on Jordan's Principle in March 2021, focused on First Nations innovation and determination in Jordan's Principle. The virtual gathering welcomed nearly 800 participants from coast-to-coast-to-coast to learn about the innovative service delivery



and coordination models that First Nations are implementing and discuss First Nations control over Jordan's Principle implementation.

Early Learning and Child Care

The AFN continues to support the National Expert Working Group (NEWG) on First Nations Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) and support implementation of the First Nations ELCC Framework and the Indigenous ELCC Framework. The AFN and NEWG have continued to support communications in the regions regarding the Frameworks and monitor their implementation nationally and regionally.

Pursuant to AFN Resolution 59/2018, *First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Regional Funding Allocation Approach*, and AFN Resolution 64/2019, *Extension of Interim Funding Model for First Nations Early Learning and Child Care*, the NEWG has continued to discuss a revised funding model for ELCC. However, due to a lack of funding to properly undertake this work from federal partners and the COVID-19 pandemic preventing leadership from gathering to discuss the funding model, the NEWG recommended extending the interim model for one fiscal year through AFN Resolution 20/2020, *Extension of Interim First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Regional Funding Allocation Approach*.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the AFN advocated for First Nations ELCC providers and services to be properly funded and supported to continue caring for First Nations children. First Nations ELCC providers have been innovative in their

service delivery throughout the pandemic, preparing food baskets, conducting virtual programming and making home visits. The AFN recognizes the exceptional role that ELCC providers have taken on during the pandemic and advocated for additional supports, which saw Canada commit up to \$71 million for COVID-19 recovery for First Nations ELCC.

The Fall Economic Statement and Budget 2021 made significant commitments towards ELCC nationally and included a substantial investment for Indigenous ELCC. Budget 2021 proposes to invest \$30 billion over five years, beginning in 2021-22, and \$8.3 billion ongoing in ELCC across Canada. Of this, \$2.5 billion over five years is dedicated to Indigenous ELCC, including investments in governance and capacity, increasing Indigenous ELCC spaces, workforce development, flexible care, and infrastructure. It also included a commitment to tabling federal ELCC legislation by Fall 2021 to "enshrine the principles of a Canada-wide childcare system in law."

Income Assistance

The AFN Technical Working Group on Social Development (TWGSD) was established by AFN Resolution 28/2018, *Support for the establishment of a Technical Working Group on Social Development*, with the mandate to advise Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) on social development program and service reform. The AFN was also mandated by AFN Resolution 89/2019, *Continuing First Nations Income Assistance Program Reform*, which directs the AFN to advocate for continued reform of the Income Assistance (IA)





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Program as well as access to the Case Management and Pre-Employment Supports for all First Nations.

The TWGSD met several times over the past year and helped to successfully advocated to ISC to increase support for the on-reserve IA Program during COVID-19. As a result, Canada committed to providing an additional \$270 million to the on-reserve IA Program to support both clients and administrators as they cope with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. The AFN and TWGSD also advocated for extended, increased funding for the Case Management and Pre-Employment Supports (Case Management) associated with the IA Program. Funding for Case Management, while not substantially increased, was extended for two years. Finally, the AFN continues to advocate to ISC for the continuation of work towards much needed long-term reform of the IA Program.

In March 2021, the AFN hosted the virtual National Forum on First Nations Income Assistance: Reform for the Future. The National Forum created a unique virtual space for over 900 attendees, including Income Assistance administrators, case managers, clients, experts, policy professionals, and technical representatives. The National Forum was an opportunity to network, share information, hear from community-based speakers, build upon best practices, and be empowered to support reform of the IA Program in their own First Nations.

Poverty Reduction Strategy

The AFN's TWGSD was mandated to work on Poverty Reduction by AFN Resolution 47/2018, *First Nations Oversight of Canada's National Poverty Reduction Strategy*. Further mandate was given to the AFN and TWGSD at the December 2019 Special Chiefs Assembly by AFN Resolution 98/2019, *Poverty Reduction for All First Nations in Canada*, which directs the AFN to support the TWGSD to pursue a study on First Nation-specific indicators of poverty.

Sustainable Development Goals

The AFN is mandated to work on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through AFN Executive Motion on International Advocacy Mandates, which supports advocating for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The AFN has also made direct reference to the 2030 Agenda and to the SDGs in many of its past resolutions, including AFN Resolution 47/2018, *Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy*; AFN Resolution 63/2018, *Eco-Agricultural Strategy*; AFN Resolution 07/2018, *First Nations Rights Title and Jurisdiction in Bill C-69*; AFN Resolution 19/2020, *First Nations Internet*; AFN Resolution 92/2018, *Social Innovation/Social Finance Framework— Leaving No One Behind*; AFN Resolution 117/2019, *First Nations Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy*; AFN Resolution 19/2019, *Seven Generations Continuum of Care*; and AFN Resolution 98/2019, *Poverty Reduction for all First Nations, among others*.

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AFN has been engaging with ESDC over the past year to ensure that First Nations perspectives and realities are considered in Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy and its implementation and has also provided direct input to the draft strategy. AFN has also created a joint workplan with the ESDC with the aim of creating greater awareness of the SDGs among First Nations. In March 2021, the AFN also presented the SDGs at the National Forum on First Nations Income Assistance to explore the linkages of the SDGs to AFN's poverty and income assistance work.





Economic Development and Infrastructure Branch

The Economic Development and Infrastructure Branch's objective is to increase recognition of First Nations jurisdiction over infrastructure, fisheries and economic development while improving the quality of program and service delivery. The Branch's sectors each play an important role in supporting First Nations' leadership, and its access to the economy and development of its infrastructure.

The goal of the Branch is to protect First Nations' economic capacity to exercise their jurisdiction, improve wellbeing among First Nations, and advocate for control over programs and services to their citizens in the areas of economic development, fisheries and infrastructure which is critical to working towards the closure of the socio-economic gap. Fisheries, hunting, forestry and food harvesting rights are longstanding advocacy areas that serve to inform emerging policy areas, such as cannabis and clean energy, to be active parts in the future economic reconciliation with First Nations.

Key Issues and Mandates/Activities

Infrastructure Sector:

The Infrastructure Sector is primarily responsible for advocating to support the creation of First Nations-led policies and solutions related to access to clean and reliable drinking water, adequate sanitation and safe and sustainable quality infrastructure.

Key Activities and Accomplishments 2020-2021:

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the gaps in infrastructure that First Nations face and has highlighted the impacts of inadequate infrastructure and the importance of clean water in responding to a pandemic or health crisis. The pandemic has also caused a significant rise in costs of construction materials for housing and construction projects. This has signalled the need for urgent federal investments, funding adjustments and political action.

In 2019, Prime Minister Trudeau committed to closing the infrastructure gap in his most recent Speech from the Throne. The AFN continues to advocate for major investments to all First Nations infrastructure, critical to First Nations' overall health and wellbeing. Urgent sustained investments are needed now to address the backlog of infrastructure in First Nations and to close the infrastructure gap facing First Nations. First Nations need access to core infrastructure to improve their communities and better fight the spread of COVID-19 and future health crises.

As a result of sustained advocacy, the federal government has agreed to work with the AFN towards the co-development of a new operations and maintenance (O&M) policy reform, which has been mandated by the First Nations-in-Assembly through Resolution 82/2019. This work is a high priority towards changing and reforming policies funding reform of First Nations Infrastructure Assets. Capacity development of a holistic Asset Management Plan standard for all First Nations infrastructure and assets is also planned for 2020-21.



This collaboration has also resulted in ISC announcements in O&M funding for drinking water and wastewater from Budget 2019, \$1.5 billion from the Fall Economic Statement towards accelerating work to lift all long-term drinking water advisories and to stabilize funding for water and wastewater, including O&M costs, and \$1.7 billion in Budget 2021.

The urgent need for investment in First Nations infrastructure was recognized in Budget 2021, which invested \$6 billion over five years to support infrastructure in Indigenous communities, with \$1.7 billion of that specifically for operations and maintenance costs. The AFN continues to advocate for the federal government to commit to sustained long-term funding over the next 5 to 15 years to bring infrastructure in First Nations up to the same level as the rest of Canada. The AFN continues to work with ISC on defining allocation for the \$6 billion in Budget 2021 towards closing the gap in infrastructure needs while working in partnership with First Nations every step of the way.

Moreover, the AFN continues to advocate for fair and equal access to safe, clean and reliable drinking water for all First Nations. Specifically, the AFN continues to urge the federal government to prioritize the human right to safe drinking water through significant investments into water treatment and distribution for all First Nations. As directed by the First Nations-in-Assembly, the AFN has advocated to the federal government to commit to working in partnership with First Nations to repeal and replace the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act (SDWFNA) with co-developed, First Nations-led legislation, to ensure that

all First Nations have access to safe drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. The AFN facilitated regionally led engagement sessions on important components of new legislation. The regional engagement held across the country in February-March 2021 provided a valuable opportunity to hear from First Nations on potential new legislation, developed by First Nations, for First Nations. Throughout 2020, the idea of a Long-Term Water and Wastewater Strategy became an important discussion that resulted in the need for engagement in further discussions around a long-term vision for First Nations water and wastewater. Simultaneously, the AFN also conducted regionally led engagements on the concept and approach to developing a long-term strategy. This work will also help fulfill the recent Throne Speech commitment to close the infrastructure gap in Indigenous communities by 2030 and to developing sustainable and predictable funding mechanisms for First Nations water and wastewater.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Moving forward, the SDWFNA engagement results will inform the negotiations and discussions of the SDWFNA Joint Working Group, which will be struck in 2021, and will help to develop the draft framework, which will guide the co-drafting of new legislation.
- Based on feedback and input from First Nations, the AFN will continue through 2021-2022 to engage with First Nations, specifically with youth, women, Knowledge Keepers/Elders and operators on the development of a long-term vision for the Long-Term Water and Wastewater Strategy.





- In collaboration with the AFN Environment, Lands and Waters Branch, the AFN will continue to advocate to Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) for meaningful First Nations' inclusion in any discussions regarding the development of the Canada Water Agency (CWA). All the regions must be given adequate resources in order for regional First Nations organizations, tribal councils and First Nations communities to be prepared to engage fully with the federal government on discussions regarding the development of the CWA.
- The AFN is also working collaboratively with ISC partners to update the Operations and Maintenance policy and actualize a funding change to address the chronic under-funding of First Nations critical water and wastewater infrastructure.
- The AFN will continue to work with ISC to ensure that the engagement plan reflects and respects the AFN's mandate, in order to ensure that the First Nations infrastructure gap is addressed in a timely manner given the 2020 Fall Economic Statement's \$25.9 million commitment to accelerating the government's ten-year commitment to close the infrastructure gap.

Economic Development Sector:

The Economic Development Sector objective is to ensure that First Nations may freely pursue economic, social and cultural development, consistent with priorities defined by First Nations and consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This Sector focuses on priorities that support sustainable economic

development, trade, resource development, procurement, agriculture, connectivity, and other economic policy matters. These areas of work are based on national resolutions as passed by the First Nations-in-Assembly and guidance is provided by the Chiefs Committee on Economic Development (CCED).

During 2020-21, the work of the Sector has focused on ensuring that federal initiatives to 'build back better' are inclusive, respect the self-determination of First Nations and full involvement in the economy. To this end, the Sector researched economic and investment needs for a draft paper, *Planning for New Investments and Approaches to support First Nations in the Economy*.

Key Activities and Accomplishments 2020-2021

Trade Relations

The AFN's work on trade relations is aligned with Resolution 36/2017, *First Nations Trade Relations*, and Resolution 38/2018, *Realizing Benefits for First Nations in the Implementation of International Trade and Investment Agreements*, to affirm First Nations' inherent right to trade and the need to advocate for First Nations options to secure greater economic independence and work with Canada to include a Trade and Indigenous Peoples chapter in trade agreements.

The AFN is currently advocating that a proposed trade agreement between the United Kingdom and Canada contain robust provisions which support market access for First Nations, safeguard the rights of First



Nations and recognize the historic and continuing relationships between the United Kingdom, Canada and First Nations. In addition, the AFN continues to monitor the implementation of the Canada Europe Trade Agreement and explore options for a First Nations Trade Commissioner's Office.

Procurement Opportunities and Benefits

Resolution 38/2019, *Increasing First Nations Procurement Opportunities and Benefits*, supports, inter alia, the establishment of a 5% procurement target; improving data collection on First Nations procurement; establishing a First Nations business marketplace; and making 95% of the procurement funds of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to be dedicated to First Nations.

Federal procurement is currently estimated to generate over \$20 billion per year and the Government of Canada committed to increasing the Indigenous procurement target to 5% of all federal procurement. If this target was met, First Nations and Indigenous business would secure approximately \$1 billion in federal contracts per year. The AFN is currently working with federal departments and First Nations organizations on meeting the 5% target, reviewing and reforming the Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Businesses. An important aspect in the work is the definition of Indigenous business which requires a balanced approach between business considerations and the recognition of the right of self-determination.

Energy Development and Natural Resources

First Nations-in-Assembly resolutions call for a focus on First Nations' approaches to economic and resource development and the role, rights and jurisdiction of First Nations in the development of regulations to ensure environmental protection and sustainable, responsible development.

Canada's strengthened climate plan, *A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy*, supported by \$15 billion in investments, is intended to help achieve Canada's economic and environmental goals. The Economic Development Sector is in ongoing discussions with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) officials to advocate for First Nations involvement in implementing this plan. The Sector will also seek opportunities for dialogue between the National Chief, the CCED and the Minister of NRCan. It will be important to get clarity on formal engagement sessions to address and align concerns and current resolutions regarding energy development.

Agriculture

Directed by Resolution 47/2016, *First Nations to Access Economic Opportunities Through a First Nations Agriculture Strategy*, the AFN has continued to gather information to support the work towards developing a comprehensive First Nations agriculture strategy that will inform the federal government and other jurisdictions, including agriculture ministers, of First Nations priorities related to the next agriculture framework in 2023.





To date, the Economic Development Sector has completed an agriculture gap analysis, a draft First Nations Agriculture and Agri-Foods Framework and a legal report which sets out foundations upon which a First Nations Agricultural Strategy can be developed based on inherent and Treaty rights as well as international law.

First Nations Connectivity and e-Strategy

The AFN has advocated for First Nations specific funding and criteria as part of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada’s (ISED) Universal Broadband Fund (UBF). Work is underway to develop a series of policy papers to support work on spectrum licensing, telecommunications infrastructure, and other connectivity opportunities. Further, First Nations working-level meetings will assist to identify key investments and areas that need to be supported for improved broadband service levels for First Nations households, business activities and in order to build, maintain and operate telecommunications infrastructure.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Work and gathering input will continue for drafting a First Nations Agriculture Strategy that reflects First Nations rights, experiences, and distinctive agricultural systems in the agriculture and agri-foods sector.
- Support and advocate for First Nations business development, sector diversity, increased procurement opportunities and benefits.
- Draft an action plan, identify performance measurement outcomes, and monitor

implementation for First Nations recommendations to address the inherent barriers associated to procurement.

- Work with First Nations technicians and officials to engage on economic research to build the case for investments into First Nations economic development, trade, agriculture, clean energy and other areas mandated by resolutions; as well as monitor and advocate for improved changes to economic programs and policies.

Fisheries Sector:

The Sector’s work is guided by the AFN’s National Fisheries Committee (NFC), which is co-chaired by Fisheries portfolio holder Regional Chief Roger Augustine (NB/PEI) and Regional Chief Terry Teegee (BC). The NFC has four technical sub-committees that advise them on various fisheries-related issues – the National Aquaculture Working Group, Inland Working Group, Oceans Working Group, Oceans Protection Plan sub-committee and the Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group.

Key Activities and Accomplishments 2020-2021:

Modernized Fisheries Act and Regulations

In 2019, Canada’s amendments to the *Fisheries Act* came into force and included considerations for Indigenous Knowledge and changes to the management of fish and fish habitat. Two workshops were hosted in Winnipeg and Halifax before the COVID-19 gathering and travel restrictions were enforced, followed by two additional workshops held using virtual platforms for



BC First Nations participants primarily in November 2020. This work continues in 2021 with workshops on Codes of Practice, Prescribed Works and Waters Regulations, Cumulative Effects, and Offsetting and Banking. The information sessions and analysis are shared with all participants with the aim to help inform First Nations technicians and aid in their consultation efforts with the Crown.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Fisheries

The Indigenous Knowledge Advisory Group (IKAG) was established in December 2019, to address the reference to Indigenous knowledge within the *Fisheries Act*. Under the guidance of the IKAG, the AFN Fisheries Sector coordinated four national technical workshops that gathered First Nations leadership, technicians, and Knowledge Keepers to share and exchange information on Indigenous Knowledge systems in fisheries. The workshop also allowed participants to provide feedback to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) on their Draft Interim Guidance Framework, which is being developed to address immediate operational needs from the amended *Fisheries Act* in

2019. The IKAG met with DFO in March 2021 for the initial review of the workshop feedback and DFO's Guidance Document. However, further sessions will be needed to review this document to further reflect First Nations inherent and Treaty rights.

Oceans Governance and Conservation

The Oceans Working Group began its exploratory work with DFO on advancing the concept of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) in the marine environment. To this end, the Fisheries Sector organized a series of workshops for coastal First Nations marine and fisheries practitioners to share experiences, needs, and considerations for advancing Indigenous-led marine conservation. A discussion paper is being developed to illuminate potential technical, policy, and legal pathways to future marine IPCA designations under First Nations' authorities.

The Oceans Working Group convened First Nations experts for an Oceans Protection Plan (OPP) subcommittee in 2020 to support and facilitate the exchange of information related to First Nations'



experiences with Transport Canada, Canadian Coast Guard, and DFO. The OPP subcommittee's work will focus assessment of the OPP, a \$1.5 billion strategy aimed at protecting Canada's coasts and waterways. The intent of the project is to evaluate the OPP design, process, and outputs, and systematically gauge the impact of the OPP on First Nations' goals with respect to their communities, and marine governance, protection, and ecosystems, and to identify successes, gaps, and areas for improvement.

First Nations in Aquaculture

In preparation for the drafting of a new federal Aquaculture Act, the National Aquaculture Working Group (NAWG) and the Fisheries Sector began to deliver Aquaculture Modules from July 2020 to October 2020 to share information and receive feedback on potential components of the Act. A technical summary report was written and titled, First Nations Act Proposal Toolkit, which will be valuable moving forward to ensure First Nations collective interests are included through the engagement and legislative process.

First Nations' Inland Fisheries

The Inland Working group for the National Fisheries Committee's work has most recently focused on the transformation of the Freshwater Fisheries Marketing Corporation to ensure it becomes more representative and accountable to the First Nations governments and the fishers it serves.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The NFC's Inland Working Group will also focus on DFO's The Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program so that its implementation will respect Indigenous groups whose rights may be affected by the Fisheries Act and Species at Risk Act project authorization decisions. The work is also to ensure more collaborative and partnering activities relating to fish and fish habitat conservation across Turtle Island waters and coastlines.
- Ongoing work on Oceans Governance and Conservation will continue to focus on addressing the gap between the implementation of IPCAs in the terrestrial and the marine environment in collaboration with the Environment, Lands, and Water Branch. Its OPP subcommittee will continue to examine the OPP and Minor Work Order Workshops. Due to the international nature and topics, the Oceans Working Group will continue to advocate for First Nations' priorities being included in the development of a new Global Biodiversity Framework,
- The IKAG will continue to focus on specific provisions within the Fisheries Act and their effects on First Nations. Specifically, analyzing feedback gathered from the workshops and a review of DFO's Draft Interim Guidance Document for the consideration of Indigenous knowledge.



**Conclusion - The Path Ahead/
Looking Forward:**

The Economic Development and Infrastructure Branch will focus on achieving outcomes in 2021-2022 which follow up on First Nations-in-Assembly mandates, as well as:

- Advocate in support of First Nations' inherent and Treaty rights, legislation, policies, and programs related to fisheries, oceans, aquaculture, aquatic habitat, and marine waterways.
- Advocate for legislation and regulation aligned with First Nations self-determination, inherent and Treaty rights, title and jurisdiction, such as in First Nations-led legislations for safe drinking water.
- Establish a business case for new investments and long-term funding needs to support First Nations infrastructure, water infrastructure, fisheries, and economic involvement – and accordingly, better support the implementation of First Nations rights, title and jurisdiction.
- Seek out engagement opportunities with First Nations to improve on policies and

programs that support First Nations' jurisdictions, priorities and objectives for infrastructure, economic development and fisheries; and

- Advocate to participate in and inform processes, such as parliamentary studies or joint working groups at officials' levels, that include activity to arrive at legislation, new investments, and better policies and programs for First Nations infrastructure, economic development and fisheries.



Environment, Lands, & Water Branch

For First Nations, the environment, land and water are life. Each are inseparable from the other, reflecting our reciprocal and lasting connection to Turtle Island and our specific lands, waters, and territories. The goal of the Environment, Lands, & Water (ELW) Branch is to advance recognition of First Nations, and support their right to self-determination as First Nations seek to reclaim jurisdiction and authority based on their inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction. In doing so, we prioritize the continued acknowledgment of First Nations as leaders in the areas of environment, lands, and water.

Key Issues and Mandates/Activities:

To advance First Nations' leadership with respect to the environment, lands, and water, the ELW Branch focuses on the following five interrelated strategic outcomes:

1. Ensure federal legislation and regulation pertaining to environment, lands, and waters upholds and advances First Nations inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction.
2. Advocate for equitable, sufficient, and direct funding related to environment, lands, and water to enable First Nations to fully implement their inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction.
3. Improve federal policies and programs related to environment, lands, and water to enable First Nations' governments to exercise their inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction, while creating space for the assertion of First Nations-led policies and programs.

4. Facilitate the creation of machinery (or processes) related to environment, lands, and waters that support the attainment of First Nations-identified long-term outcomes, while respecting the inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction of First Nations.
5. Support First Nations in the development of strategies related to environment, lands, and water, and advocate for their full consideration in federal decision-making processes.

Environment Sector

The AFN Environment Sector actively works to position First Nations as leaders in environmental action, driving transformative change across a range of issues including conservation and biodiversity, climate change, and environmental health. This includes supporting the recognition of First Nations' inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction, and the application of First Nations' self-determination in legislative, policy and program development.

Accomplishments 2020-2021:

Conservation and Biodiversity

The Environment Sector has remained steadfast in its efforts and advocacy in support of First Nations leadership in conservation and biodiversity. This has included hosting two national technical dialogue sessions on Species at Risk conservation, with additional sessions to follow this year. In addition, we have remained engaged in the federal Pathway to Target 1 initiative, advocating for the recognition of First Nations' contributions



towards domestic conservation targets and increased First Nations' representation in governance structures and decision-making processes.

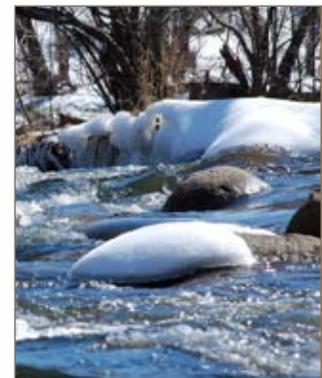
Caribou represent a very significant part of the culture and food systems for many First Nations. As many of their herds face plummeting populations, the Environment Sector continues to advocate for their protection by participating in the National Boreal Caribou Knowledge Consortium, and by working with First Nations to support their leadership in stewardship. Letters sent to both Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and President Joe Biden supporting the Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation have contributed to the February 23, 2021, joint announcement to safeguard the calving grounds of the Porcupine Caribou Herd. Among the threats faced by caribou and other ungulate populations, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) may be the most serious. CWD is a contagious degenerative neurological disease that is fatal to deer, moose, elk, and caribou. The Environment Sector is developing a discussion paper that highlights the critical role of First Nations in wildlife health management, along with communications tools to raise awareness amongst First Nations harvesters of this spreading disease. The Environment Sector also continues to participate in the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as it develops its Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. This will continue through AFN's participation on the Canadian Delegation to the CBD and in its partnership with the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB).

Climate Action

Since the passing of AFN Resolution 05/2019, *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency*, in July of 2019, the Environment Sector has advanced several priorities related to First Nations climate leadership, including hosting the first ever AFN National Climate Gathering (March 3-4, 2020, Whitehorse, YT), as well as the on-going development of an AFN National Climate Strategy through webinars and surveys. In total, eight webinars have been held, involving around 180 First Nations from across the Country. A national Climate Change Survey is also currently still open for First Nations participants. The Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA) has continued working virtually despite the health pandemic, seeking to advance First Nations interest in the new federal climate plan, *A Healthy Environment and A Healthy Economy*. This has included the public release of the JCCA's Annual Report to the National Chief and Prime Minister. Other climate related activities have included participation in the Canadian Net-Zero Accountability Act (Bill C-12) as it progresses through the Parliamentary process.

Environmental Health

The Food, Environment, Health, and Nutrition of First Nations Children and Youth (FEHNCY) study was initiated by way of AFN Resolution (04/2019, *Support for the Food, Environment, Health and Nutrition of Children and Youth (FEHNCY) Study*) to address the knowledge gap relating to the impact of built, social and natural environments on the nutrition and health of First Nations children and youth. This new study, officially





launched in November 2019, is a partnership between AFN, Health Canada and four universities (the University of Ottawa, Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and McGill University). Two First Nations – Fort Albany and Kanesatake – expressed interest to participate in the FEHNCY 'pilot' study. Remote data collection has begun in Kanesatake (due to COVID) and is expected to conclude this year. The FEHNCY team has worked collaboratively with the leadership of both pilot communities to modify study activities and tools in accordance with federal, provincial, and local COVID-19 guidelines. FEHNCY has commenced initial outreach in the Atlantic region and will begin data collection in six randomly selected Atlantic First Nations in the fall of 2021. The Environment Sector has remained engaged in the on-going review of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) and Chemicals Management Plan (CMP) through engagement with the Minister of Environment as well as federal officers and departments. The Environment Sector is reviewing, monitoring, and will be seeking opportunities to engage Canada on the newly introduced Bill C-28 (An Act to amend CEPA) and is also taking on a leadership role in AFN's engagement with the Nuclear waste Management Organization (NWMO).

Key Resolutions involving the Environment Sector include:

- 17/2020: *Support for First Nations Climate Leadership, Food Sovereignty, Environmental Protection, Stewardship and Conservation*
- 95/2019: *First Nations full partnership in the implementation of the Pan-Canadian*

Approach to Species at Risk Conservation in Canada

- 05/2019: *Declaring a First Nations Climate Emergency*
- 04/2019: *Support for Food, Environment, Health and Nutrition of First Nations Children and Youth (FEHNCY) Study*
- 03/2019: *The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)*
- 63/2018: *Eco-Agricultural Strategy*
- 58/2018: *First Nations Response to Chronic Wasting Disease*
- 66/2018: *North American Caribou Protection Conservation Management and Recovery*
- 64/2018: *Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas – Pathway to Canada Target 1: Conservation 2020 Initiative*
- 120/2016: *Establish a First Nations specific committee under the Species at Risk Act.*

Lands Sector

In this era of decolonization and reconciliation, Canadian law and policy must support the self-determination of First Nations, which has been undermined through colonial policies and practices. Canada's policies and processes must recognize and respect the unique priorities and approaches that each First Nation chooses to pursue, and the Lands Sector seeks to support each First Nation regardless of its approach.

The AFN Lands Sector is focused on finding opportunities to support First Nations self-determination through advocacy, policy and legislative initiatives, and by facilitating the cross-pollination of First Nations approaches through data collection and information sharing.



Accomplishments 2020-2021:

Specific Claims

The Lands Sector, with assistance from its First Nations' technical representatives on the AFN-Canada Joint Technical Working Group on Specific Claims (JTWG), developed an AFN Draft Specific Claims Reform Proposal. The Proposal was informed by input from Canadian legal experts, the Specific Claims Tribunal, and First Nations experts in research, negotiation, and Indigenous laws. The development of the Proposal was a significant achievement that will support and guide ongoing engagement with Canada. The AFN will continue to work with Canada through the JTWG to create a fully independent specific claims process. In May 2021, the AFN publicly released the AFN Draft Specific Claims Reform Proposal for public comment. Once the public review is complete, the AFN will review all public comments and revise the Draft Reform Proposal, as necessary.

Additions to Reserve

Minister Bennett's 2019 mandate letter included a commitment to work with First Nations to reform the Additions-to-Reserve (ATR) Policy. Through consistent advocacy by the National Chief and the Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources, Canada agreed to create a joint AFN-Canada Lands Table to carry out the review of the existing ATR process and facilitate the development of recommendations for reform. The AFN-Canada Lands Table was finalized in 2020 and joint work planning was initiated to support a comprehensive review of the ATR Policy and process in 2021-22.

AFN advocacy on ATR contributed to substantive federal investments in the 2021 Federal Budget, which allocated \$43 million over three years to support reform. Moving forward, the AFN will seek greater clarity on how these funds will be used and to ensure First Nations are meaningfully included in the development of any new ATR Policy or process.

Reserve Creation/Recognition

While ATR reform is a critical AFN objective, finding new ways to support First Nations seeking to create a reserve or achieve federal recognition was also an ongoing priority for the Lands Sector in 2020. For the first time in several years, the Lands Sector successfully advocated for limited funding to support analysis on these important issues, resulting in an initial scan of those First Nations seeking to create a reserve or Band, and a preliminary analysis of some of the fundamental issues and impediments that exist. In 2021, the AFN will expand its efforts through the AFN-Canada Lands Table, focusing on a policy review of the New Bands/Band Amalgamation Policy being carried out by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

Title and Rights

The AFN continued to meet with representatives from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs (CIRNAC) at a joint table to discuss Minister Bennett's 2019 commitment to reform the Comprehensive Land Claims Policy (CLCP) and Inherent Right to Self-Government (IRSG) policy, and to better understand federal processes available to First Nations





Branch Reports



to implement their inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction.

First Nations have clearly stated through multiple AFN Resolutions that they reject both the CLCP and IRSG, and that they are seeking alternative approaches that are consistent with their interests. While Canada has previously acknowledged that these policies fall short of Canadian and international law, they remain substantively unchanged. As an alternative, Canada points to the Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination Discussion Table process, which theoretically creates space for First Nations and Canada to jointly develop negotiation mandates based on First Nations priorities.

While having access to flexible processes to enable First Nations to determine their own priorities with the Crown is important, it is equally important to ensure that the Government of Canada has clear public facing policies and principles guiding its negotiations, and that they be consistent with the Honour of the Crown and the minimum standards established through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It is also critical that Canada's approaches create space for all First Nations, and do not undermine the inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction of any First Nation in the name of certainty or expediency.

Key Resolutions that involve the AFN Lands Sector include:

- 05/2010: *Support for Band & Reserve Status for Whitewater Lake First Nation in Ontario*
- 26/2012: *Additions to Reserve Process and Policy Reform*
- 48/2015: *Develop a Federal Comprehensive Land Claims Policy Based on the Full Recognition of Aboriginal Title*
- 17/2016: *Call on Canada to Update the Additions to Reserve Policy*
- 91/2017: *Support for a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*
- 94/2018: *Reject Canada's Approach to Additions to Reserve Legislation*
- 05/2019: *Support for a First Nations led Engagement Process on Nation Building*
- 09/2020: *Jointly Develop a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*
- 14/2020: *Issues with ability to register land under 53/60*

Water Sector

The AFN Water Sector has the responsibility to support First Nations' stewardship over inland and marine waters. This involves supporting the implementation of AFN's wide-ranging mandates and initiatives focused on water stewardship, which include jurisdiction over water (i.e., title and rights) and conservation initiatives (e.g., protected areas, habitat loss, biodiversity preservation).

Accomplishments 2020-2021:

Resulting from the recent AFN re-organization, this newly created Sector works to ensure that federal legislation aligns with First Nations inherent and Treaty



rights, title, and jurisdiction with respect to water stewardship (environmental protection and conservation). The advocacy work of the Water Sector will look to advance water leadership amongst First Nations. First Nations have long had a deep connection to water. The goal of the Water Sector is not to replace other AFN sectors that advocate for water-related issues (e.g., safe drinking water), but rather, it is to work in collaboration and coordination in a multi-dimensional, comprehensive approach. Water-related issues begin with adverse water quality. Without adequate water quality to support the delicate food web amongst aquatic species, we would have no fish, and without a protected water source, we cannot acquire clean drinking water. The condition of our water is not only dependent on how well we protect it, but it is acutely dependant on broader environmental influences, including climate change.

Water is essential for life. There is an urgent need to ensure our inland and marine waters are protected from further degradation caused by anthropogenic sources, as well as the negative impacts of climate change. Our workplan will advocate for the creation of an AFN National Water Strategy that envisions our fully upheld inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction. Additionally, our work will include a special emphasis on elevating the leadership role of women in water related activities across Turtle Island, since this is a role traditionally held by women.

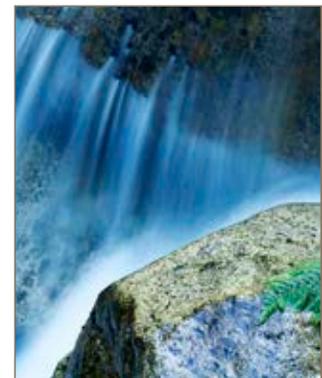
Key Resolutions involving the Water Sector include:

- 01/2019: *First Nations Treaty and Inherent Rights to Water*

- 93/2017: *Legal Recognition for Kichizibi (Ottawa River) Watershed*
- 20/2017: *Respecting Inherent Rights and Jurisdiction over Waters Parallel to the Review of Canada's Navigation Protection Act*
- 131/2016: *Protecting the Rights of Water Protectors: Review and Amendment of Anti-Terrorism Act, 2015*
- 69/2016: *Support for the Peel River Watershed in Yukon Territory*
- 45/2016: *National Water Conservation and Protection Strategy for The Great Lakes*
- 49/ 2015: *Protection of Algonquin Sacred Waterfalls Area: Akikodjiwan Kichi Zibi (Chaudiere Falls, Ottawa River)*

Conclusion - The Path Ahead/ Looking Forward:

The ELW Branch will work in 2021-22 to continue to advance the inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction of First Nations as they relate to the environment, lands, and water in both the national and international setting. Working with our Chiefs Committees, along with other experts, ELW staff will remain at the forefront of AFN's advocacy in this regard. This will include hosting another national climate/ environment gathering early in 2022, finalizing an AFN National Climate Strategy, as well as advancing First Nations' interests in supporting the development of new federal lands policies – including a fully independent claims commission – well into the future. We look forward to working with you, the First Nations-in-Assembly, to address these and other critical issues in a thoughtful, engaging, and supportive way.





Rights and Justice Branch

The goal of the Rights and Justice Branch is to achieve the full recognition of First Nations rights and jurisdiction. To advance this important work, the Branch is supported by three distinct sectors that focus on the areas of Rights, Justice, and Governance. Each of the Sectors are actively engaged in new and on-going mandates that will produce on-the-ground changes in the areas of First Nations policing, MMIWG, the UN Declaration and Emergency Services. A more in-depth look at the work of each Sector is provided below.

Rights Sector

This Sector focuses on the interaction between First Nations and the colonial legal systems by examining how First Nations laws and legal orders 'stand up' and interface with colonial governments. Relatedly, this Sector supports the work on existing legal interface systems, such as Treaties, Modern Treaties, and the evolving colonial legal constructs that are relevant to First Nations such as, Bill C-15 and the implementation of the UN Declaration Action Plan.

Accomplishments 2020-2021

UN Declaration

Almost every AFN Resolution since 2011, which were passed by consensus from the Chiefs-in-Assembly, explicitly referenced Articles of the UN Declaration. In 2019, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 86-2019 *Support for Federal Legislation to Create a Framework to Implement the UN Declaration*. The resolution directs the AFN to pursue and support a government

implementation bill that must be, in the least, as strong as Bill C-262.

In February 10-11, 2021 the AFN held a two-day National First Nations Leadership Forum on Bill C-15 where First Nations leaders discussed this important legislation from a diversity of perspectives. On April 13, 2021, after hearing the important perspectives of First Nations leadership, the AFN presented 12 recommendations to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs (INAN) that would strengthen Bill C-15. Of the twelve (12) recommended amendments five (5) were accepted by Parliament. Bill C-15 moved to the Senate for pre-study on April 20, 2021. The AFN proceeded to advocate for the passage of Bill C-15 at the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples. On June 16, 2021, with the AFN's five (5) recommended amendments preserved, Bill C-15 passed the 3rd reading of the Senate.

The 2021 federal budget has set aside \$31.5 million over the next two (2) years to support the co-development of the C-15 Action Plan that must be tabled by the Crown. The AFN continues to advocate for more resources to support all First Nations as rights-holders in this process.

Treaty Commissioner's Office

To date there are myriad of resolutions from the Chiefs-in-Assembly that engage the issues of respect for Treaties, both historic and modern. Specifically, Resolution 78/2015 directs the AFN to support Treaty Nations to *Establish a Treaty Commissioner's Office*.



In 2020-2021, the AFN advocated and secured funding to support Treaty Nations 1-11 to explore the establishment of a Treaty Commission Office (TCO) with the purpose of each Treaty Nation to provide recommendations, thoughts and discussion for further direction. Throughout 2020-2021, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the AFN supported those Treaty regions that wanted to conduct this work. The outcome of this Treaty Nation-led work is anticipated to support a refined and informed approach for the eventual creation of a Treaty Commission to be modeled according to Treaty Nation direction.

The AFN, moving forward on mandate 78/2015 will support TCO discussions and respect the critical ceremonial protocols necessary for this sacred and distinct work.

Bill S-3 on Citizenship, An Act to amend the Indian Act in response to the Superior Court of Quebec decision in Descheneaux c. Canada

The Chiefs-in-Assembly have identified numerous issues associated with S-3 *An Act to amend the Indian Act in response to the Superior Court of Quebec decision in Descheneaux c. Canada (Procureur général)* in 2017. These issues include the need for new resources to address the increased number of potential new citizens.

First Nations women led the advocacy that forced Canada to confront the gender-based discrimination inherent in the Indian Act leading to the creation of Bill S-3. As a national advocacy organization, the AFN is not a rights-holder and instead focuses on advocacy as per resolution mandate via Chiefs-in-Assembly. The AFN will continue to

advocate in support of First Nations impacted by S-3 and will provide discussion papers to bring awareness to this long-standing issue and its generational impacts.

Resolutions regarding First Nations citizenship and registration have mandated the AFN's work in this area such as mandates 36/2015 *Indian Status Application Process*; 53/2015 *The Right of First Nations to Determine their individual and Collective identities*; 59/2016 *First Nations Citizenship*; 71/2016 *Ducheneaux Decision: First Nation jurisdiction on Citizenship and Identity*; and 30/2017 *Inherent Authority to Define Citizenship*.

Justice Sector

This Sector supports First Nations interests to assert jurisdiction in justice-related systems, including policing, prevention and harm reduction strategies to end the overrepresentation of First Nations in the criminal justice system.

Accomplishments 2020-2021

Social Justice

The most recent mandates of the AFN have come through Resolution 07/2020, *Calls for Reform to Address Institutional Racism in the Justice system*, in which the AFN advocates for increased funding for Gladue reports, enhanced training for Gladue writers, and the implementation of Gladue principles across Canada's justice system. In addition, Resolution 2020/06, *Support for Advocacy on Systemic Racism in Canada*, directs the AFN to urge federal and provincial governments to take concrete steps to prevent, combat and





eradicate systemic racism, racial discrimination, and intolerance in many of Canada's institutions, including the criminal justice system.

Stemming from these mandates, the AFN has advocated for the development of a National Indigenous Justice Strategy to address discrimination and the overrepresentation of First Nations peoples in the justice system, to which the federal government positively responded to in January 2021 through its supplementary mandate letters. The Justice Sector is focused on advocating for reform to the criminal justice system as well as support for the establishment of First Nations-led, and culturally-appropriate alternatives to the existing justice system.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG)

The AFN Women's Council is participating in the work to develop and implement a National Action Plan to end violence against Indigenous women and girls. This important work will ensure that all governments, private sectors and service providers implement the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girl's *Calls for Justice*. The work of implementing the National Inquiry's *Calls for Justice* is crucial to recognizing and upholding the human rights of First Nations women, girls, and two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual (2SLGBTQQIA+) people.

On June 3, 2021 the AFN released a First Nations National Framework Action Plan in response to the 231 Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). The First Nations National Framework Action Plan is entitled "*Breathing Life into the Calls to Justice*" and was developed with direct input from First Nations survivors of gender-based violence and families of missing or murdered loved ones. The First Nations National Framework Action Plan contains sections with action items of national scope devoted to the following chapters: supporting families and survivors, a framework for prevention, and a framework for healing. It also contains action items targeted to the four (4) theme areas from the 231 *Calls for Justice*, they include, Culture as Safety, Health and Wellness, Human Security and Justice.

The First Nations National Framework Action Plan will contribute to the federal government's MMIWG National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people and will be a driving force in the implementation of the 231 *Calls for Justice*. The First Nations National Framework is just one part of the First Nations response to the National Inquiry's 231 *Calls for Justice* with a specific national lens to the identified actions, the framework report will also include regional priority and action plans developed based upon on-going regional engagement. As each regional report is completed, it will be added to this First Nations National Framework as complementary components to help advocate for implementation.



First Nations Policing

In 2020, Statistics Canada announced their commitment to gather data on Indigenous and ethno-cultural groups in police-reported crime statistics on victims and accused persons. This was a welcomed announcement as it reflected one of the recommendations made by the AFN to the SECU committee on Public Safety and National Security.

Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Bill Blair also announced in 2020, a commitment to co-develop a legislative framework that would recognize First Nations policing as an essential service. This announcement was also welcomed and reflected the long-term advocacy efforts of First Nations to replace the First Nations Policing Program (FNPP).

During the 2020 AFN Annual General Assembly, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed various resolutions that mandated the AFN to assist in reforming the justice system and to co-develop legislation that would recognize First Nations policing as an essential service. Resolution 2017/45 seeks “Federal Investments in First Nations Police Services” and directs the AFN to advocate that First Nations policing services as an essential service, be equitable with municipal and provincial police services and to remind the Government of Canada of its obligation to engage with First Nations to address the public safety of First Nations citizens.

Further, this Sector is directed by Resolution 2017/01, *Four Corner Table Processes on Community Safety and Policing*, to support the creation of a Four Corner Table process

when requested to involve the leadership of First Nation, federal, provincial and municipal levels to address public safety issues and discrimination directed at First Nations individuals. The Sector further supports First Nations leadership in their political advocacy for community safety engagement.

In March of 2021, the AFN held a National Forum on First Nations Policing and Justice in which participants expressed their vision for what essential services legislation could look like. Many indicated that essential services must include reforms to police governance, stable funding for First Nations police services, the establishment of long-term solutions, support for victim services and community-based policing, and the recruitment of First Nations people into First Nation policing services. In addition, the AFN established a technical committee to provide advice on the development legislation and policies that will ensure equitable and stable funding for First Nations police services.

Governance Sector

The Governance Sector, while still under construction, is being designed to support First Nations as they move towards reconstituting their Nations and rebuilding their governing systems. This important work will be achieved by supporting First Nations in the development of their institutional and administrative processes. A critical component of a First Nations governing system is their capacity to exercise jurisdiction. As a long-term goal support will be provided to assist First Nations with the creation of laws, policies, and protocols as a means to guide their decision-making





Branch Reports



processes on all matters impacting their interests. Emergency Services is a current example of where First Nations jurisdiction is exercised through First Nations-led decision making and planning processes, which continues to expand and is fostered within this Sector.

Accomplishments 2020-2021

Emergency Services Unit (ESU)

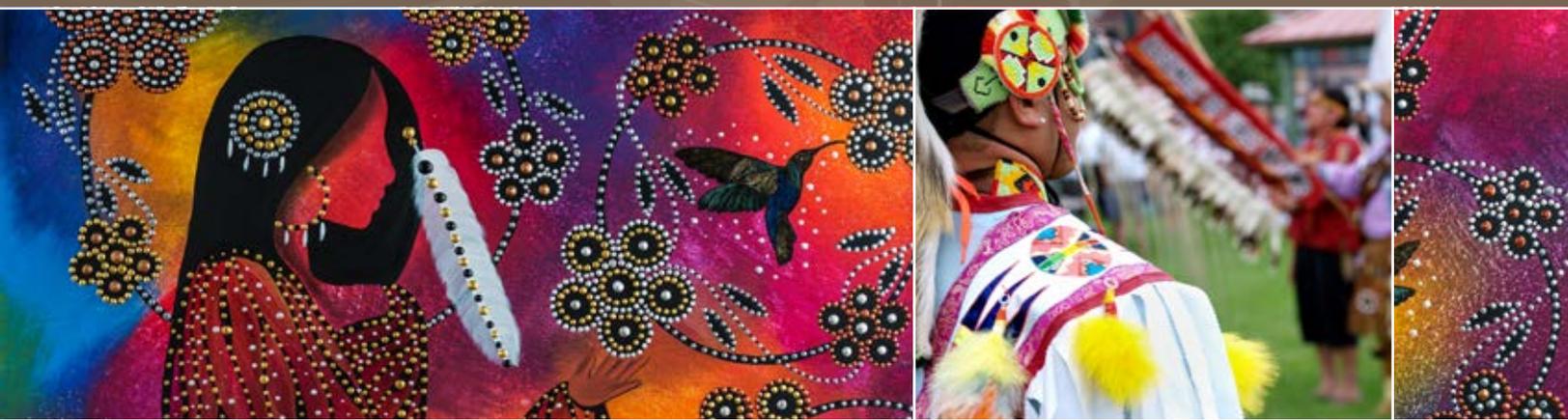
The AFN Emergency Services Unit advocates for First Nations to assume control of their own emergency management regimes and to gain access to funding that is comparable to municipal services. Recent advocacy efforts in this area include the promotion for the development of First Nations-led emergency management regimes and ensuring all Indigenous Services Canada emergency management policies, processes, and procedures are inclusive of regional First Nations representation and contribution.

In March of 2021 Emergency Services held an initial strategic planning session to develop a strategic plan for First Nations care and control of emergency management. The full development of the strategic plan will transpire over a projected five (5) year period and will seek to ensure First Nations eligibility to assume the role and responsibility of the administration of culturally appropriate emergency management regimes.

As of May 2021, the ES Unit co-developed the Steering Committee on First Nations Home Flood Insurance Needs project with the Emergency Management Directorate in Indigenous Services Canada. The focus of this

project is to examine the issues and challenges surrounding on-reserve First Nations access to flood insurance products.

The work of the ES Unit is mandated by the Chiefs-in-Assembly through various resolutions that include: 03/2015 - *First Nation Involvement in Emergency Preparedness*; 83/ 2019 - *First Nations Control of Emergency Management*; and 84/ 2019 - *Call for Emergency Operations Management Planning in First Nations*.



*Financial Statements of the
National Indian Brotherhood*

March 31, 2021



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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Executive Committee of
National Indian Brotherhood

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Indian Brotherhood (the "Corporation"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies (collectively referred to as the "financial statements").

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Corporation as at March 31, 2021, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards ("Canadian GAAS"). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Corporation's financial reporting process.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon, in the Annual Report.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

We obtained the Annual Report prior to the date of this auditor's report. If, based on the work we have performed on this other information, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact in this auditor's report. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian GAAS, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Corporation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Corporation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Deloitte LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants
July 5, 2021

National Indian Brotherhood
Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2021

	Schedules	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue			
Indigenous Services Canada	A	23,748,077	30,839,466
Health Canada	A	5,160,982	4,264,992
Employment and Social Development Canada	B	1,029,929	1,150,632
Public Health Agency of Canada	B	1,010,628	809,428
Canadian Heritage	B	923,789	1,594,402
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	B	621,586	1,527,100
Environment and Climate Change Canada	B	477,635	1,675,397
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	B	142,086	542,454
Parks Canada	B	156,974	275,000
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	B	149,653	124,038
University of Ottawa	B	96,800	88,000
Canadian Internet Registration Authority	B	60,378	—
Natural Resources Canada	B	54,550	100,000
Status of Women Canada	B	52,358	210,602
Transport Canada	B	28,175	—
Public Safety Canada	B	—	87,116
Other departments	B	550,701	2,890,785
		34,264,301	46,179,412
Expenses			
Advertising, promotion and publications		397,612	241,052
Amortization of capital assets		160,214	176,279
Insurance		27,815	27,112
Miscellaneous		27,041	54,459
Bad Debt		18,974	—
Office expenses		717,499	863,228
Professional fees		8,130,512	10,632,933
Regional service delivery		6,037,320	4,898,459
Rent		1,416,669	1,364,957
Salaries and benefits		13,452,473	15,175,203
Travel and meetings		1,151,955	12,444,190
		31,538,084	45,877,872
Excess of revenue over expenses		2,726,217	301,540

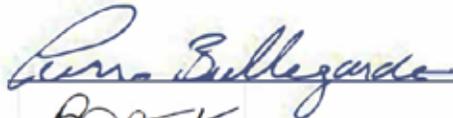
The accompanying notes and supporting schedules are an integral part of the financial statements

National Indian Brotherhood
Statement of financial position
As at March 31, 2021

	Notes	2021 \$	2020 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash		28,994,410	13,049,922
Grants and contributions receivable	4	2,041,931	3,725,710
Other accounts receivable		106,481	427,270
Due from National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund		—	67,760
Sales tax recoverable		555,026	810,712
Inventory		193,433	171,306
Prepaid expenses		232,495	437,302
		32,123,776	18,689,982
Asset held in trust	3	16,041	15,911
Prepaid expenses		353,903	158,854
Capital assets	5	370,913	507,547
		32,864,633	19,372,294
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		4,518,449	7,979,676
Government remittances payable		108,649	209,155
Deferred contributions	6	22,814,437	8,560,383
Excess contributions	7	948,657	874,986
		28,390,192	17,624,200
Liability held in trust	3	16,041	15,911
		28,406,233	17,640,111
Contingencies and commitments	8 and 9		
Net assets			
Invested in capital assets		370,913	507,547
Internally restricted		4,000,000	1,200,000
Unrestricted		87,487	24,636
		4,458,400	1,732,183
		32,864,633	19,372,294

The accompanying notes and supporting schedules are an integral part of the financial statements.

On behalf of the Executive Committee

 Perry Bellegarde, National Chief

 , Roger Augustine, Regional Chief, Management Committee

National Indian Brotherhood
Statement of changes in net assets
Year ended March 31, 2021

	Invested in capital assets \$	Internally restricted \$	Unrestricted deficiency general operations \$	2021 Total \$	2020 Total \$
Net assets, beginning of year	507,547	1,200,000	24,636	1,732,183	1,430,643
Excess of revenue over expenses	—	—	2,726,217	2,726,217	301,540
Internal transfer	—	2,800,000	(2,800,000)	—	—
Acquisition of capital assets	23,580	—	(23,580)	—	—
Amortization of capital assets	(160,214)	—	160,214	—	—
Net assets, end of year	370,913	4,000,000	87,487	4,458,400	1,732,183

Notes

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The accompanying notes and supporting schedules are an integral part of the financial statements.

National Indian Brotherhood
Statement of cash flows
Year ended March 31, 2021

	Notes	2021 \$	2020 \$
Operating activities			
Excess of revenue over expenses		2,726,217	301,540
Items not affecting cash			
Amortization of capital assets		160,214	176,279
		2,886,431	477,819
Changes in non-cash operating working capital items	10	13,013,877	813,499
		15,900,308	1,291,318
Investing activities			
Decrease in due from Trust Fund		67,760	18,099
Acquisition of capital assets		(23,580)	(436,198)
		44,180	(418,099)
Financing activity			
Repayment of long-term debt		—	(80,000)
		—	(80,000)
Net increase in cash		15,944,488	793,219
Cash, beginning of year		13,049,922	12,256,703
Cash, end of year		28,994,410	13,049,922

The accompanying notes and supporting schedules are an integral part of the financial statements.

National Indian Brotherhood

Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

1. Description of the organization

National Indian Brotherhood (the "Corporation") was incorporated under Part II of the *Canada Corporations Act* on September 29, 1970. In June 2014, the Corporation received a certificate of continuance under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*. The Corporation has the following objectives:

- To assist and to work toward solutions for problems facing the First Nations people;
- To operate as a national body to both represent the First Nations people and to disseminate information to them;
- To study, in conjunction with First Nations representatives across Canada, the problems confronting First Nations and to make representations to the government and other organizations on their behalf;
- To assist in retaining the First Nations culture and values; and
- To act as the national spokesperson for First Nations throughout Canada.

The Corporation acts as the secretariat to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

The Corporation is a not-for-profit organization and, as such, is not subject to income taxes.

2. Accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and include the following significant accounting policies:

Basis of presentation

The financial statements do not include the accounts of those of the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund (the "Trust Fund"), which is controlled by the Corporation. Summarized financial statements of the Trust Fund are disclosed in Note 12 of the financial statements.

Revenue recognition

The Corporation follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions.

Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate program when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate program in the year in which the related expenses are incurred.

Contributions received toward the acquisition of capital assets are deferred and amortized to revenue on the same basis as the related depreciable capital assets are amortized.

Financial instruments

The Corporation initially measures its financial assets and financial liabilities at fair value. The Corporation subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost except for cash which is measured at fair value.

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

2. Accounting policies (continued)

Capital assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost. Contributed capital assets are recorded at estimated fair value at the date of contribution. Amortization is provided on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets as follows:

Computer equipment	3 years
Office equipment	3 years
Leasehold improvements	10 years

Excess contributions

The excess of revenue over expenses of some programs may require repayment and is recorded as a liability. When approval to retain the funds has been received, the excess is then recorded as revenue.

Allocation of expenses

Allocation of administrative expenses between the programs or funding agencies is done in accordance with the stipulated basis of allocation and maximum amounts or percentages mentioned in each of the different contribution agreements entered into by the Corporation.

Use of estimates

The preparation of these financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements and the accompanying notes. In the opinion of management, these financial statements reflect, within reasonable limits of materiality, all adjustments necessary to present fairly the results for the years presented. Assumptions are used in estimating the collectability of grants and contributions receivable, other accounts receivable, the amount of inventory reserves, the useful life of capital assets, the amount of certain accrued liabilities and the allocation of expenses. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

3. Asset held in trust

The Corporation is holding in trust an education fund totaling \$16,041 (\$15,911 in 2020) for Kelly Morrisseau's children. These funds were donated by individuals and organizations.

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

4. Grants and contributions receivable

Grants and contributions receivable are as follows:

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	762,899	1,031,000
Indigenous Services Canada	456,214	399,827
Status of Women Canada	334,990	87,500
Natural Resources Canada	154,550	100,000
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	149,653	112,762
University of Ottawa	96,800	—
Public Health Agency of Canada	53,968	432,690
Employment and Social Development Canada	28,557	7,234
Environment and Climate Change Canada	4,300	1,004,500
Parks Canada	—	275,000
Public Safety Canada	—	200,000
Transport Canada	—	75,197
	2,041,931	3,725,710

5. Capital assets

	2021		2020	
	Cost	Accumulated amortization	Net book value	Net book value
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Computer equipment	248,243	175,232	73,011	84,916
Office equipment	376,134	290,396	85,738	153,927
Leasehold improvements	421,983	209,819	212,164	268,704
	1,046,360	675,447	370,913	507,547

6. Deferred contributions

Changes in the deferred contributions balance are as follows:

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Balance, beginning of year	8,560,383	7,925,406
Revenue received during the year	48,518,355	46,855,600
Revenue recognized during the year	(34,264,301)	(46,220,623)
Balance, end of year	22,814,437	8,560,383

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

6. Deferred contributions (continued)

The balance, end of year is composed of the following:

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Indigenous Services Canada	17,140,574	6,149,715
Employment and Social Development Canada	2,503,868	2,344,538
Heritage Canada	1,427,934	22,430
Public Safety Canada	1,039,439	—
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	305,879	12,098
Status of Women Canada	195,142	—
Environment and Climate Change Canada	124,968	31,603
Parks Canada	43,026	—
Canadian Internet Registration Authority	33,607	—
	22,814,437	8,560,383

7. Excess contributions

Excess contributions are as follows:

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Indigenous Services Canada	841,773	768,102
Public Safety Canada	106,884	106,884
	948,657	874,986

8. Contingencies

The Corporation receives funding from various government agencies based on specific program needs and budgets and allocates certain expenses to the various programs. In many cases, the funding agency has the right to review the accounting records to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of their programs. At this time, no estimate of the requirements, if any, to reimburse the agencies can be made. Management of the Corporation believes that its allocations of expenses are fair and appropriate in the circumstances. Adjustments to the financial statements as a result of these reviews, if any, will be recorded in the period in which they become known.

9. Commitments

The Corporation is committed to future minimum lease payments under operating leases for office space and equipment maturing in 2025, for which minimum annual payments for each year are as follows:

	\$
2022	1,456,338
2023	1,406,846
2024	308,788
2025	67,660
	3,239,632

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2021

10. Changes in non-cash operating working capital items

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Grants and contributions receivable	1,683,779	(41,101)
Other accounts receivable	320,789	(236,345)
Sales tax recoverable	255,686	(195,196)
Inventory	(22,127)	14,202
Prepaid expenses	9,758	100,161
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(3,461,227)	395,671
Government remittances payable	(100,506)	89,802
Deferred contributions	14,254,054	634,977
Excess contributions	73,671	51,328
	13,013,877	813,499

11. Controlled entity

The Corporation appoints the trustees of the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund, a registered charity under paragraph 149(l)(f) of the *Income Tax Act*, to administer the Language and Literacy Fund, the Youth Healing Fund, the Research Sponsor Fund, the Heroes of Our Time Fund, the Education Fund, the Métis Fund, and the Education Legacy Fund. The National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund is deemed a non-profit organization under the *Income Tax Act* (Canada), and accordingly is not subject to income taxes.

The summarized financial statements of the Trust Fund are as follows:

Summarized statement of financial position

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Assets	238,627,624	195,483,764
Liabilities	1,334,649	1,624,209
Fund balances	237,292,975	193,859,555
	238,627,624	195,483,764

Summarized statement of operations

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Revenue	54,691,213	1,408,933
Expenses	10,722,522	11,140,342
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	43,968,691	(9,731,409)

11. Controlled entity (continued)

Summarized statement of cash flows

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Operating activities	17,290,040	(1,969,922)
Investing activities	(1,969,922)	3,525,364
Net (decrease) increase in cash	(974,526)	1,555,442
Cash, beginning of year	1,903,108	347,666
Cash, end of year	928,582	1,903,108

As at March 31, 2021, the balance due from the Trust Fund was \$0 (\$67,760 in 2020).

For the year ended March 31, 2021, the Corporation received \$50,492 (\$36,066 in 2020) from the Trust Fund for services relating to the administration and management of the Trust Fund and \$63,605 for the rental of office space (\$57,065 in 2020). The Trust Fund entered into a new rental agreement with the corporation for shared office space in Akwesasne until 2024. The total annual cost of the rental space is \$11,212 per annum.

The transactions with the Trust Fund have been recorded at their exchange amount which is the amount in accordance with the agreements signed between the parties.

12. Executive salaries

By virtue of an annual general assembly resolution (62/98), the National Chief of the AFN receives a salary which is adjusted annually in connection with the consumer price index. Similarly, by virtue of a Confederacy of Nations resolution and an Executive Committee resolution, each Regional Chief is allocated a director's fee. Management and unelected officials are compensated within average industry remuneration levels for their positions.

13. Pension plan

The Corporation contributes to a defined contribution pension plan for its employees. Contributions are up to 8% of an employee's salary. The employer's contributions for the year were \$817,423 (\$801,657 in 2020).

14. Credit facility

The Corporation has a banking agreement which establishes a demand credit facility for general business purposes up to a maximum of \$2,500,000, bearing interest at prime plus 1%, renewable annually. The credit facility is secured by a general security agreement representing a first share over all of the Corporation's assets. The balance outstanding at year-end is \$nil (\$nil in 2019).

15. Financial instruments

Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of the Corporation's financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk is comprised of currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. The Corporation is not exposed to market risks.

Credit risk

The risk arises from the potential that one party to a financial instrument will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the other party to incur a financial loss.

The Corporation's various receivables represent credit provided for the Corporation's programs. The credit is provided mainly to the federal government and accordingly presents minimal credit risk to the Corporation.

The maximum credit exposure of the Corporation is represented by the fair value of various amounts receivable as presented in the statement of financial position.

16. Capital Management

The Corporation considers its capital to consist of net assets. The Corporation's overall objective is to effectively use resources to maximize the ability to achieve its vision, fund tangible capital assets, future projects and ongoing operations. The Corporation manages net assets by establishing internally restricted funds and appropriating amounts to the restricted funds for anticipated future projects, contingencies and other capital requirements. These allocations are disclosed in the statement of changes in net assets.

The Corporation is not subject to externally imposed capital requirements.

Internally restricted net assets

Net assets are internally restricted for specific operating purposes as authorized by the Board of Directors from time to time. Internally restricted balances are supported by a clear statement of purpose, and an anticipated time frame for the accumulation and draw down of the balance at the time established.

The purpose of any internally restricted balance is consistent with the objectives of the Corporation's strategic initiatives and operating plans, as well as identified risks to the achievement of these objectives.

During the year ended March 31, 2021, an amount of \$2,800,000 was internally restricted (\$100,000 in 2020) for the above mention purposes.

17. COVID-19

Since the beginning of 2020, financial markets have had significant downturn as a result of COVID-19, with investors attempting to gauge the severity of the widening epidemic and the implications for global growth. As it is difficult to predict the duration and magnitude of the epidemic, plenty of uncertainty prevails at this time. It is expected that the financial markets will remain extremely fragile until there is more visibility surrounding the COVID-19 crisis and, as a result, it is too early to reliably measure the potential impact and severity of this crisis on the financial results.

**National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations**
Year ended March 31, 2021

Schedule A – Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

	Basic Organizational Capacity	Core Like	New Fiscal Relationship	Additions to Reserve	Building a Vision for an Indigenous Peoples House	Bill S-3 Indian Act Registration Reform	Legislation to Implement UN	Specific Claims	Reform of the FNC&FS Program
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue									
Contributions/grants	5,545,726	3,500,000	190,000	170,420	27,079	406,340	620,000	67,500	258,125
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	542,247	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	5,545,726	3,500,000	190,000	170,420	27,079	406,340	620,000	609,747	258,125
Expenses									
Advertising, promotion and publications	100,129	6,310	—	872	—	7,159	1,310	9,928	4,521
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	—	13,535	—	—	36,940	—	17,703	23,466
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	6,267	—	70	—	—	276	116	1,182	361
Bad debt	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	196,249	24,970	111	6,131	—	22,058	5,893	58,002	12,177
Professional fees	541,585	124,375	—	6,900	—	94,030	468,415	42,363	2,426
Regional service delivery	750,001	2,478,792	—	—	27,482	—	—	—	—
Rent	290,647	9,626	1,410	14,500	—	26,271	27,140	41,686	19,659
Salaries and benefits	3,500,885	700,927	174,714	135,380	—	218,468	113,167	397,992	189,900
Travel and meetings	159,968	155,000	160	6,637	—	1,138	3,959	41,526	5,615
	5,545,731	3,500,000	190,000	170,420	27,482	406,340	620,000	610,382	258,125
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(5)	—	—	—	(403)	—	—	(635)	—

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
 Year ended March 31, 2021

Schedule A - Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (continued)

	Social Development Work Plan	Indigenous Summer Work Experience Project	Bill C-92, Act Respecting FN, Metis & Inuit Children	FN Economic Recovery	Economic Development	O&M, Housing and Infrastructure Project	AFN Emergency Services Project	FN Education Mgmt and Capacity Development
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue								
Contributions/grants	337,868	15,299	287,468	216,987	122,846	1,285,470	222,890	1,577,029
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	—	35,403	1,113,496	—	496,062
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	337,868	15,299	287,468	216,987	158,249	2,398,966	222,890	2,073,091
Expenses								
Advertising, promotion and publications	7,466	—	4,488	5,347	8,669	34,480	—	23,289
Allocation of administrative expenses	30,715	—	27,513	—	—	—	30,000	—
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	587	—	361	187	578	1,885	282	1,660
Bad debt	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	20,412	—	8,985	11,566	16,038	102,016	—	119,744
Professional fees	9,223	—	33,891	107,773	97,515	1,116,548	2,101	941,646
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rent	31,005	—	19,659	9,999	14,605	98,533	15,299	127,074
Salaries and benefits	204,005	15,299	189,192	82,115	16,917	803,936	174,453	745,795
Travel and meetings	34,455	—	3,379	—	3,927	241,568	755	113,883
	337,868	15,299	287,468	216,987	158,249	2,398,966	222,890	2,073,091
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
 Year ended March 31, 2021

Schedule A – Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (continued)

	FNEAA and Covid19 - Plan and Respond	Engagement on NAP to end Violence	FN Capacity Engagement in the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change	New UNDRIP Proposal	Implementing the AFN-Canada MOU on Joint Priorities	Comprehensive Claims	Funding to host a National gathering on FNCFS	Analyzing FNCFS Agency Needs Project
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue	250,000	156,444	1,858,451	187,600	3,000,000	—	—	—
Contributions/grants	—	78,298	—	—	—	155,000	119,431	603,011
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	250,000	234,742	1,858,451	187,600	3,000,000	155,000	119,431	603,011
Expenses	—	5,444	12,785	18,249	8,229	697	—	—
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	—	165,806	20,000	360,000	—	—	—
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Amortization of capital assets	—	434	952	—	1,586	1,120	—	—
Insurance	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bad debt	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	18,499	48,424	17,589	13,761	54	4,597	—
Office expenses	—	5,224	1,127,015	14,500	661,062	—	35,320	603,011
Professional fees	—	—	—	—	335,000	—	—	—
Regional service delivery	—	21,695	72,875	15,862	128,909	27,082	—	—
Rent	—	181,777	370,516	99,000	1,349,128	122,071	645	—
Salaries and benefits	—	1,669	60,078	2,400	142,609	3,976	78,870	—
Travel and meetings	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	250,000	234,742	1,858,451	187,600	3,000,284	155,000	119,432	603,011
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	—	—	—	—	(284)	—	(1)	—

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2021

Schedule A - Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (continued)

	Support of FN to attend the 2019 Wildland Fire Canada Conference	Indigenous Resilience Stand Alone Report	IRSSA Order of Perrell J.	Health Contribution Block Funding	Health Supplementary Health Benefits	Health IRS RHSP	Health Jordan's Principle	Health Compensation Help Desk	2021 Total	2020 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue										
Contributions/grants	—	—	176,386	4,395,705	251,051	88,665	—	43,640	25,258,989	28,170,534
Contributions/grants - prior years	82,108	43,093	—	5,665	—	—	376,256	—	3,650,070	6,933,924
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	82,108	43,093	176,386	4,401,370	251,051	88,665	376,256	43,640	28,909,059	35,104,458
Expenses										
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	—	1,708	32,281	5,054	1,288	4,311	1,016	305,030	149,791
Allocation of administrative expenses	10,321	4,231	10,043	400,723	22,823	8,060	34,205	3,967	1,220,051	1,179,890
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	10,442	—	—	—	—	10,442	14,493
Insurance	—	—	106	1,767	391	93	352	92	20,705	21,360
Bad debt	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12,157
Office expenses	37,080	1,095	3,291	102,835	8,227	7,266	11,189	1,560	879,819	727,399
Professional fees	20,445	37,767	804	245,737	2,509	20,713	96,065	—	6,736,445	9,121,173
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	2,500,000	—	—	—	—	6,063,793	2,844,861
Rent	—	—	8,572	101,220	22,922	5,027	18,338	4,475	1,174,090	1,047,797
Salaries and benefits	—	—	151,092	980,174	188,825	42,751	174,865	32,530	11,356,519	11,445,524
Travel and meetings	14,262	—	770	26,191	300	3,467	36,931	—	1,143,493	8,544,324
	82,108	43,093	176,386	4,401,370	251,051	88,665	376,256	43,640	28,910,387	35,108,769
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	(1,328)	(4,311)

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2021

Schedule B - Other funding agencies

	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Elders Council Indigenous Knowledge System	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Supporting Capacity of National Indigenous Organization to Engage in Conservation	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Climate Change Canada - AFN Chronic Wasting Disease Working Group	Employment and Social Development Canada - Homelessness	Employment and Social Development Canada - Summer Student	Employment and Social Development Canada - Labour Market Information
Revenue						
Contributions/grants	—	43,000	43,971	—	11,760	279,994
Contributions/grants - prior years	31,603	—	—	200,343	—	127,972
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
	31,603	43,000	43,971	200,343	11,760	407,966
Expenses						
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	—	—	2,447	—	8,219
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	2,000	3,997	—	—	—
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	—	230	195	213	—	544
Bad debt	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	—	2,644	2,079	11,253	—	23,866
Professional fees	—	860	2,500	17,955	—	31,574
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rent	—	3,867	5,200	10,068	—	30,387
Salaries and benefits	—	33,418	30,000	157,891	11,760	304,707
Travel and meetings	—	—	—	516	—	8,669
	31,603	43,019	43,971	200,343	11,760	407,966
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	—	(19)	—	—	—	—

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2021

Schedule B – Other funding agencies

	Natural Resources Canada - Indigenous Engagement Strategy	Nuclear Waste Management Organization - Foster Positive Dialogue	Parks Canada	Public Health Agency Canada - Planning & Engaging with FN Child Welfare	Transport Canada	Status of Women Canada	University of Ottawa - First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study	Other	2021 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue	54,550	129,989	156,974	595,067	28,175	52,358	96,800	75,000	4,398,052
Contributions/grants	—	12,097	—	—	—	—	—	—	481,489
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	386,306	386,306
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	89,395	89,395
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	54,550	142,086	156,974	595,067	28,175	52,358	96,800	550,701	5,355,242
Expenses									
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	6,171	1,445	—	—	1,134	1,988	33,067	92,582
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	19,667	20,475	10,000	—	6,420	8,800	(1,492,144)	(1,220,051)
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	149,772	149,772
Insurance	—	196	160	—	—	89	196	3,520	7,110
Bad debt	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27,041	27,041
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	18,974	18,974
Office expenses	1,007	4,460	8,932	—	—	2,407	5,626	(331,571)	(162,320)
Professional fees	6,133	100	27,046	585,067	33,349	613	2,457	9,047	1,394,067
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	(26,473)	(26,473)
Rent	4,550	11,155	12,842	—	—	4,497	6,704	46,190	242,579
Salaries and benefits	42,865	100,082	85,574	—	—	37,039	70,579	(528,171)	2,095,954
Travel and meetings	—	255	500	—	—	159	450	(91,294)	8,462
	54,555	142,086	156,974	595,067	33,349	52,358	96,800	(2,182,042)	2,627,697
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(5)	—	—	—	(5,174)	—	—	2,732,743	2,727,545



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