Assembly of First Nations

55 Metcalfe Street, Suite 1600
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L5
Telephone: 613-241-6789 Fax: 613-241-5808
www.afn.ca

Assemblée des Premières Nations

55, rue Metcalfe, Suite 1600
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 6L5
Téléphone: 613-241-6789 Télécopieur: 613-241-5808
www.afn.ca

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
July 23, 24 & 25, 2019, FREDERICTON, NB

Resolution no. 38/2019

TITLE:	**Increasing First Nations Procurement Opportunities and Benefits**
SUBJECT:	Economic Development
MOVED BY:	Chief Stanley Grier, Piikani First Nation, AB
SECONDED BY:	Chief Derrick Henderson, Sagkeeng First Nation, MB
DECISION:	Carried; 7 abstentions

WHEREAS:

A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:

i. Article 5: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.

ii. Article 20 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems or institutions, to be secure in the enjoyment of their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities.

iii. Article 21 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

B. First Nations businesses continue to actively contribute to Canada's economy and are poised to be major contributors in the procurement space. However, First Nations have significant barriers when it comes to access to procurement opportunities.

C. The Government of Canada has stated that it is committed to achieving reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through a renewed, nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership as the foundation for transformative change.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 25th day of July 2019 in Fredericton, New Brunswick

Perry Bellegarde

PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF

Head Office/Siège Social
Unit 5 —167 Akwesasne International Rd., Akwesasne, ON K6H 5R7 Telephone: 613-932-0410 Fax: 613-932-0415
Suite no 5 —167, chemin Akwesasne International, Akwesasne (ON) K6H 5R7 Téléphone: 613-932-0410 Télécopieur: 613-932-0415

D. Government procurement has been, and will continue to be, a key component of the Canadian economy. Improved access and support for First Nations businesses to access the federal procurement market represents a significant growth opportunity. The Government of Canada is currently undertaking a process towards the modernization of the Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB). Targeted Indigenous procurements under the current PSAB represents less than 1% of all federal procurements.

E. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN), with the guidance of the Chiefs Committee on Economic Development (CCED), has developed an evergreen discussion paper, *Procurement in Canada: Possible Actions to Increase First Nations Opportunities and Benefits,* which outlines recommendations to increase First Nation procurement opportunities including:

- **i.** undertaking an independent First Nations-led review and action plan to review procurement.
- **ii.** establishing a 5% First Nations Federal Government mandatory procurement target and increasing sole source thresholds for First Nations businesses.
- **iii.** improving First Nations procurement data collection and reporting capabilities.
- **iv.** establishing federal/provincial/territorial oversight bodies to increase enforceability of procurement targets
- **v.** improving international trade procurement opportunities.
- **vi.** establishing a comprehensive First Nations business marketplace.
- **vii.** fulfilling the procurement recommendations provided by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Estimates.
- **viii.** making 95% percent of the funds within Indigenous Services Canada procurement be dedicated to First Nations.

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

1. Support the recommendations outlined in the evergreen discussion paper *Procurement in Canada: Possible Actions to Increase First Nations Opportunities and Benefits* for submission to the Government of Canada to inform the modernization of the federal Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB).

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2. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to seek resources to continue to coordinate First Nations input into the further development of options and recommendations to increase First Nations procurement opportunities and benefits.
3. Direct the AFN Chiefs Committee on Economic Development (CCED) to continue to advocate for options to increase First Nations procurement opportunities and benefits in federal, provincial/territorial and private sector procurement.

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