



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

ANNUAL REPORT 2018–2019





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 Percy Sacobie:

WOLASUWELTOMUWAKON

(who-la-zoo+w-wel-dum-wah-gun)

GIVING THANKS

At the first light of the day, it's the time where all things share the new day together. No matter who, what, or where they are. We all share the same beat. The human, flyers, crawlers, swimmers, and so on. We are all one nation on our mother and on the "island" called Turtle Island. The woman represents the Wabanaki peoples of the dawn land. I chose a woman as a central figure because it is the heartbeat of our mothers that we hear first. For the Wolastoqiyik, the matriarch would wear the white headdress. The flowers in the piece are wild roses native to the eastern door, which are often depicted on beaded clothing. It is easy for people to notice large things in life but if you sit still and pay attention, you'll begin to notice the smaller things and how important they are, bees are a prime example.

The sun represents the new day with a Wabanaki symbol, this actual symbol was carved on a paddle in the 1800s. The butterflies represent renewal and rebirth and the robin represents determination; both representing an ongoing thing we as the original peoples of these lands know all too well. The woman's clothing is covered in double curve motifs to represent the eastern peoples, which at one time was very important to eastern nations. It was not uncommon for our matriarchs to wear the white headdress as they were held in high regard.



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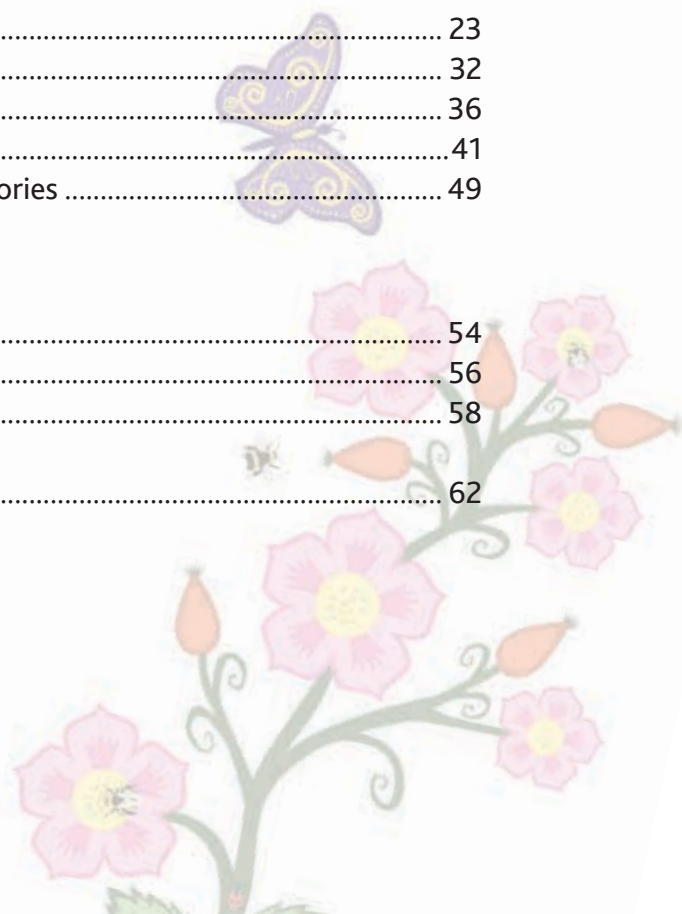




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NATIONAL CHIEF REPORT





Report from National Chief Perry Bellegarde

Assembly of First Nations

Chiefs, Councillors, fellow leaders, friends, relatives, Elders and Knowledge Keepers — welcome to our 40th Annual General Assembly.

I extend thanks to our wonderful hosts, the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet Nations as well as Regional Chief Roger Augustine, Chief Polchies and the host committee.

Over the past year, First Nations have worked together on shared priorities and we have made significant progress. I lift up and thank the many Chiefs, Councillors, First Nations leaders, Elders and all the diligent and dedicated women and men who work to move us forward.

Together we have been successful in elevating First Nations' priorities to the top of the national agenda.

As of the 2019 federal budget, we have seen the largest ever investment in First Nations' priorities, with over \$21.4 Billion over seven fiscal years. This much needed funding will address important issues such as education, housing, infrastructure, language revitalization, health care, loan forgiveness, and mental wellness services.

Just over a month ago, I was privileged to witness Royal Assent of two very important pieces of legislation – Bills C-91 and C-92. Both Bills represent important steps to implement two key Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and long-standing priorities of the Chiefs-in-Assembly.

The *Indigenous Languages Act (C-91)*, will ensure that future governments are required to fund First Nations-driven initiatives to support and strengthen our languages on a

statutory basis and establish the Office of the Indigenous Language Commissioner. Further, this Act affirms and codifies our language rights as protected by Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. I have been deeply honoured to work with so many language activists and First Nations leaders to champion this initiative over the past three years. It is inspiring to finally see it become a reality. We will all look forward to seeing and hearing our young people and the generations to come speaking our languages.

An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families (C-92), will open doors to greater First Nations control over child welfare so that our young people in care remain in our communities and nations in a loving and familiar home. This bill will ensure that First Nations laws and jurisdiction have paramouncy over provincial and federal governments, and we end the current systems that reward apprehension. With more children currently in foster care than at the height of the Residential Schools, the status quo is not acceptable.

The AFN organized and rallied for both national and international support for New Democratic Party MP Romeo Saganash's Bill C-262, a law that would have supported implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. While it did not pass in the Senate, we won much support for this initiative within and beyond Parliament. I share your frustration about the unconscionable actions of Conservative Senators to prevent a final vote on it. Now is the time for us all to urge every federal party to include this in their 2019 election platforms.





First Nations in British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon are especially pleased to know that the federal government will be forgiving any loan taken by a First Nation for the negotiation of comprehensive claims and self-government, including any loans that were already paid back by the First Nation. These loans will be forgiven or, where they have already been paid, they will be reimbursed. First Nations should not have to pay for the restoration of their rightful land base. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) advocated for this in the most diligent and concerted manner, contributing to this positive outcome.

In 2018, we successfully advocated for the end of the development of the federal Recognition and Implementation of Rights Framework. Any process that impacts First Nations' rights, must be First Nations led, designed with us and founded on a proper understanding of our rights.

The AFN is a place where First Nations can support each other. First Nations are currently working with each other on First Nations' perspectives to address four badly-flawed federal policies – comprehensive claims, specific claims, additions to reserve and the inherent right to self-government. The AFN is pleased to help facilitate this work with your nations to ensure respect for your inherent rights, title and jurisdiction. This work must be done right and cannot be rushed.

There is progress on many fronts, but still the socio-economic gap in quality of life remains for First Nations. We have much more work to do.

When I was re-elected last year, I campaigned on a promise to initiate dialogue on updating the Charter of the Assembly of First Nations. Our Charter guides us and provides structure and process for all the work First Nations choose to undertake together. I'm happy to announce that work is underway, informed by previous processes and supported by expert advice in change management. This team will be travelling the country to engage with First Nations, Tribal Councils, Provincial and Territorial Organizations, and leaders on how best to improve and modernize the AFN. There have been no major changes to the Charter in over thirty years. It's time that we do this important work. I look forward to joining you in listening to a presentation on this at our AGA.

A personal highlight of the past year was the AFN's inaugural Round Dance hosted in Ottawa last winter. Over four hundred people from across the region attended and it was great to see both First Nations people, non-First Nations people as well as the AFN staff take part in the night.

This fall sees the federal election and as such, we are working to influence party platforms. Elevating First Nations priorities and informing First Nations about the impact and importance of voting is part of our message. We can remind all federal parties and leadership of the importance of the First Nations vote, and the need to address First Nations priorities in the platforms. The last federal election saw the largest turnout ever





for First Nations voters. We are a force and our voices will be heard.

I urge you to share the merits of voting in this fall's federal election. Research the party platforms. We can send a strong, clear message that the First Nations vote matters, that the First Nations vote can influence the outcome in many ridings and, most importantly, ensure all parties understand that prioritizing our issues is the right thing to do.

Since we gathered last year in Vancouver, I've had the pleasure of visiting many First Nations throughout our territories. I thank you for your warm welcome and hospitality. And as always, I welcome the opportunity to discuss not only the issues before you but the solutions that you see. With this, welcome to our Assembly. May this be a productive week of marking our landmark achievements, as well as moving forward on the important work to uphold our rights and improve the lives of our peoples.

Kinanāskomitin,

National Chief Perry Bellegarde





REGIONAL CHIEFS' REPORTS





Regional Chief Morley Googoo

Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

Welcome to this year's Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Annual General Assembly (AGA), hosted in beautiful Maliseet and Mi'kmaq Territory! I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all the Chiefs and delegates to this event. The past few months have been an exciting time filled with events. My regional office is also going through organizational transition as we restructure and build our team. In addition to the important work in our region to advance the interests of our Mi'kmaq people, I am pleased to continue my assignments with my two national portfolios: Sports and Recreation and Culture and Arts. Although we do not have funding specific to these portfolios, these are very important areas for our communities and youth to participate in. It reinforces our strength as a people and our identity as Mi'kmaq.

Here is an overview of my Regional Chief portfolios and activities since the Special Chiefs Assembly in December.

Key Activities and Accomplishments as Regional Chief

Engaging Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

We have continued to work collaboratively with our Chiefs, Councils, and communities in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland for the continued advancement of Mi'kmaq rights and initiatives.

New Regional Office

We are currently in the process of setting up our regional satellite office in Halifax, Nova Scotia. As part of this process, we are creating two special gathering spaces. The *Nora Bernard Traditional Healing Room* will be a special cultural room for those who wish

to do ceremony and learn more about our Mi'kmaq teachings. The *Grand Chief Gabriel Sylliboy Executive Board Room* will provide a dedicated, central location for Mi'kmaq leaders to meet. We are aiming for completion of our offices to coincide with Treaty Day on October 1, 2019.

First Nations Self-Government Summit

In November 2018, our office coordinated a special and historic gathering of the Mi'kmaq community and invited leaders, speakers and stakeholders who have blazed a trail in First Nations self-government. National Chief Perry Bellegarde, along with three former National Chiefs, addressed more than 500 stakeholders and community members at the Halifax Convention Centre during three days of meetings, presentations, and discussions. Events and engagements like the Self-Government Summit are important activities to gauge the community position on self-government and share best practices.

New Year's Eve Gala

Our office hosted a New Year's Eve Gala at the Membertou Trade and Convention Centre. This event was a beautiful celebration held in the spirit of reconciliation, peace, and friendship.

Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope

We co-hosted the Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope Youth Education Forum. We co-created a process and program for identifying 36 First Nations youth from each of the AFN regions to create space for the youth voice to be heard. This space allowed for youth to be supported emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and physically while learning about the past, sharing about their present, and discussing



their ideas and vision for the future of First Nations education. These youth used a circle-based, consensus model to process through ideas, insights, and recommendations to end with five Calls to Action on First Nations Education.

Mi'kmaq Youth Students on Ice

We are sending 10 Mi'kmaq youth to sail from Greenland to Nunavut, this summer, as part of the Students on Ice 2019 Expedition (SOI). The SOI is an award-winning and globally unique educational program. Since 1999, they have taken more than 2,500 students, educators, Elders, scientists, artists, musicians, and leaders, from 52 countries around the world, on educational expeditions to the Arctic and the Antarctic. We believe in the power of connecting youth to nature, and fostering within them an appreciation for the planet, themselves, and each other.

Key Activities and Accomplishments in Sports and Recreation

Halifax Thunderbirds – National Lacrosse League

We partnered with the new Halifax Thunderbirds team as they announced their membership in the National Lacrosse League. As many are aware, lacrosse originates from the First Nations people of Canada. We are working with the Thunderbirds to incorporate our perspectives and ceremony, and will continue to work with them to collaboratively grow the game of lacrosse in Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Summer Games

In August 2018, the Mi'kmaq Summer Games were hosted by the Eskasoni First Nation in

Nova Scotia. These games have been a tradition for the Mi'kmaq and support positive cultural identity for our youth and communities. This year's Summer Games will be held in the Waycobah First Nation and we wish all of the athletes much fun and success!





Pan Am Games in Peru

We are coordinating a project for seven Indigenous elite-level youth athletes, from across Canada, to have the unique opportunity to travel to the wonderful country of Peru for the Pan American Games this summer. They will experience another Indigenous culture and visit Machu Picchu. Our goal is to create an opportunity for our athletes to dream big and to share the story of their journey with other youth in their communities. We believe shared cultural experiences are crucial to the educational development of our youth. This is part of a larger partnership we have developed with the Canadian Olympic Committee, and we look forward to other exciting initiatives in the future.

North American Indigenous Games, Halifax 2020

The North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) was established to improve the quality of life for Indigenous peoples by supporting self-determined sports and cultural activities, which encourage equal access to participation in the social, cultural, and spiritual fabric of the community in which they reside. Halifax, Nova Scotia has been selected as the site for the NAIG 2020, and excitement is mounting, especially since it will be hosted in tandem with next year's AFN Annual General Assembly! This is historic, it will be the first time that the NAIG and the AFN AGA will be held in the same city, enabling our leadership and attendees to support both of these major events. This will be the largest event ever hosted in Halifax, and the Games have been officially introduced with a major brand launch and media event. We look forward to

seeing everyone and offering a big Mi'kmaq welcome to one and all.

Key Activities and Accomplishments in Arts and Culture

Develop Nova Scotia – Advancing Mi'kmaq Arts and Culture

Our office is working with Develop Nova Scotia, the Crown corporation responsible for leading sustainable development of high potential property and infrastructure across Nova Scotia, with the view to drive inclusive economic growth in our province. Specifically, our office is providing advisory services for the integration of Mi'kmaq culture and arts on the waterfront. This is an exciting opportunity for our artists to showcase their work and we are excited to be part of this project.

In Closing

While my regional office and staff continue to develop our organizational capacity, I am excited for the many projects that we will work on, both regionally and nationally, and look forward to the year ahead.

Wela'lin (In the spirit of Peace and Friendship),

*Regional Chief Morley Googoo,
Nova Scotia and Newfoundland*

Regional Chief Roger Augustine

New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island

Greetings Chiefs and delegates and welcome to the 2019 Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Fredericton, New Brunswick. I am extremely pleased to be the host Regional Chief for the 2019 AGA, and would like to thank and congratulate the Local Organizing Committee, co-chaired by Chief Alan Polchies Jr. of the St. Mary's First Nation, our host First Nation community, for their hard work and vision to ensure that the delegates from across the country experience Mi'kmaq and Maliseet culture and hospitality.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

I have been actively involved nationally, participating in the AFN Executive Committee, the AFN Management Committee and the National Fisheries Committee meetings. This has been a productive year of transition with new leaders and technicians joining the Assembly of First Nations. I am pleased to report on the regional issues our team has been working on over the past year.

Self-Government Summit

Co-hosted with the AFN Regional Office of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, we successfully held an event that attracted more than 400 delegates to hear from First Nations leaders from across the country on their struggles to implement their own self-governance models. It is always a pleasure to welcome National Chief Perry Bellegarde, and our past National Chiefs: Ovide Mercredi, Georges Erasmus, and Matthew Coon Come. To learn more about the event and speakers, visit www.selfgovernmentsummit.ca.

Fishermen's Pow Wow

This is an annual event, coordinated through my office, where we bring together First Nations and non-First Nations fishermen in a spirit of peace and friendship. This year we are honouring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and we are working towards healing our communities through culture.

Day School Class Action

I have worked extensively on this file and have politically advocated for the conclusion of this class action suit. It will be a pivotal moment for those communities who have experienced loss of culture and language from attending Day Schools. I am confident that an announcement regarding the decision on this file will be coming soon.

Mental Health Project

As I reflect on my personal growth and those of our people across the country, I am pleased to announce that the Mental Health Project, an important project of mine that will impact and benefit mental wellness and healing, has been approved for funding. Over the course of the next year, extensive work will be coordinated to get this project off the ground, and I look forward to sharing more information on it in the near future.

Regional First Nations Successes

I am pleased to share with delegates that there have been many successes in our region. The leaders continue to work diligently to advance their Treaty rights and improve relations for their members. I would like to congratulate the following First





Nations for their determination and leadership to work for their members:

- The Eel Ground First Nation's Day of Action – practicing their inherent Treaty right to snow crab fishing.
- The Pabineau and Eel River Bar First Nations signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Port of Belledune regarding a consultation protocol.
- The Metepenagiag and Esgeenoopetitj First Nations signed a Memorandum of Understanding of a Friendship Accord with the City of Miramichi and the Eel Ground First Nation.
- The Elsipogtog First Nation and the Government of Canada sign a Memorandum of Understanding regarding Self-Government Protocol for Negotiations.

Conclusion

In closing, I would like to thank my colleagues and the staff of the Assembly of First Nations for their commitment to working for the advancement of First Nations rights, title and Treaty rights, across the country, for the benefit of First Nations peoples.





Regional Chief Ghislain Picard

Quebec and Labrador

The recently published Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) supports two priorities of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL), which are the safety of First Nations women and girls, and the extreme importance of being able to rely on police services that meet our needs, both within and outside our communities.

Based on denunciations by First Nations women of unacceptable violent situations, with the support of women Chiefs, the Quebec Native Women (QNW), and the consistent support of our AFNQL Chiefs, I have spared no effort in making countless interventions in this regard with other governments, both in Ottawa and Quebec. During several meetings with the Provincial Premier, and the federal and provincial ministers of Public Safety, and with the Chiefs' support, I have denounced their refusal to admit their indifference to the key challenges that relate to the safety of First Nations women and girls, and their negligence in regard to police services available to First Nations, both within and outside our communities.

Outside our communities, several Indigenous women have voiced concerns and we stand with them in condemning the unacceptable attitude and behaviour displayed by many members of the Sûreté du Québec. Within our communities, we have demonstrated that support for police services under the authority of First Nations was clearly, systematically and dangerously deficient. I feel compelled to say that, in these two cases, there is still much to be done despite sustained efforts.

The action taken by the federal and provincial governments to commission inquiries on the subject happened after far too much deliberation. The National Inquiry on MMIWG just released an extensive report. It is important to note here that the Commissioners have taken the time to submit a special report, specifically, on the situation endured by First Nations in Quebec. This gesture of the Commissioners speaks volumes about our reality.

On the provincial side, after months of refusal to face its responsibilities, the government set up its own inquiry on the treatment of First Nations by some public services. The inquiry is called, the Commission Viens, named after the presiding judge. The Commission has now completed its work and will present its report next fall.

In the course of the past year, with the support of our Chiefs and our legal advisers, we have made numerous representations with these two Commissions of Inquiry and have tabled a comprehensive report refuting this the unacceptable reality facing First Nations women and girls. It was also decided that we would bring our grievances before the United Nations. I have accompanied women Chiefs who had the opportunity to express themselves before this international organization.

Despite these actions and sustained efforts, I remain convinced that significantly more remains to be done, as much in the area of violence against Indigenous women and girls as for the support for our own police services. Without questioning the competence and good intentions of the Commissioners who focused on these major issues, I remain convinced that it is up to us, the First Nations, to assume the task of





ensuring that there will be follow-up on the reports of these two commissions.

Experience has shown that, all too often, the other governments consider their objectives have been met once the reports are tabled. Their attention then turns to other issues, if not their own political survival. As leaders designated by our people, to whom we are directly accountable, we shall be insistent and relentless in our efforts to make sure all of these recommendations are followed.

The causes of these denounced situations are well rooted in history and in the very functioning of society. Those who are surprised that the term “genocide” is used have their heads firmly planted in the sand, and they are probably comfortable there.

We are convinced that we will need to maintain sustained efforts to relentlessly denounce these situations and tirelessly support First Nations women and girls. I have already committed myself to it. We are mandated by our people for that reason.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the AFNQL Chiefs who, for a tenth consecutive mandate, have entrusted me with the important task of acting as Regional Chief and being their spokesperson. This is a responsibility that is both heavy and very challenging. In dealing with it, one should never lose sight of the day-to-day reality of First Nations people, the quality of services, and the political representation they can rightfully expect. Sincerely, this is what I have been trying to do for almost 30 years now. I am most grateful for the honour bestowed upon me.

The last year saw the election of a new provincial government formed by the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ). The CAQ is seen as a young political party. I am forced to say that, after seven months in power, it is an old political party. I say an old party because it seems to be relapsing into the same old incompetency, and the same ignorance or indifference towards Indigenous issues as the previous provincial governments. I must denounce the blatant lack of respect for the Aboriginal and Treaty Rights that we hold.

Since I have held the position as Regional Chief of the AFNQL, I believe this is the seventh Premier, the seventh provincial government that I’m dealing with. Should I really try once again to make our voices heard? Explain one more time who we are, what our rights are all about, and what our reality is? Of course I will, and to the best of my capacity, because these are my convictions, and it is my mandate.

I will not deny a sense of exasperation at the attitude of the successive provincial governments in Quebec to remain closed. I believe there is a need to seriously question this constant regressive attitude and the underlying reasons that could explain it.

The federal government, for its part, has led us into a series of political and administrative proposals, which it describes as a transformation. What is the reality of these proposed changes? What are the real impacts on our populations, on the implementation of our rights? The First Nations that constitute the AFNQL have devoted much time and energy to these issues over the recent months. The federal government is increasing its consultations, but our questions are often left unanswered.



Beyond the federal electoral agenda, which could compromise this proposed transformation, it is important for the AFNQL to take stock of our governance as it relates to the intentions and actions of the federal government, regardless of which party will form the government come next fall.

The AFNQL is devoting considerable time and effort to the federal election at this very moment.

Beyond the issues that originate from other governments, it is important to protect the essential cohesion that First Nations must maintain between themselves. All different in their cultures, their ways of life, their geographical locations, First Nations remain the first inhabitants of our lands, which were never ceded, and they must be respected as such. The respect for who we are, for our rights, our cultures and languages, our practices, remains the essential condition for our development. This is the message of Elders and this is what young people expect from their leaders.

Ghislain Picard





Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald

Ontario

First, let me acknowledge that we are gathered on the unceded territory of the Maliseet and Mi'kmaq peoples – territory that is covered by a Treaty of Peace and Friendship, first signed with the British Crown in 1726, that established rules of peace and friendship between Nations. Also, thank you to Regional Chief Roger Augustine for hosting the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Annual General Assembly this year.

It is my pleasure to present this, my first annual report as Ontario Regional Chief. The 2018-2019 year has been memorable and fulfilling for me, despite the challenges and uncertainty facing the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) as an organization. I offered a renewed vision as we turn the corner in transforming our organization into a more measured, stronger, efficient, and effective organization, which is committed to bringing about transformative outcomes for all First Nations in the Ontario region.

I would like to thank the Political Confederacy (PC) who, despite tremendous adversity, has assisted me to move some difficult issues forward. I also acknowledge the leadership of the four Grand Chiefs of the Provincial Territorial Organizations (PTOs), who serve as the Board of Directors for the Secretariat, as well as their Executive Directors, who have acted as a Senior Management Committee (SMC). The Board and SMC have been attentive and dedicated in their roles and have been invaluable in guiding an administrative overhaul and supporting the renewed stability of the organization. It takes a great team to manage the complex issues of our region, and I want to acknowledge the COO staff who have served our First Nations and have assisted me in fulfilling my duties. Finally, I'm grateful to our Chiefs in Ontario, for your

ongoing patience, support, and encouragement throughout the year.

During this first year of my mandate, I have focused on sharing a heart-centered approach to my responsibilities as Ontario Regional Chief. I have been purposeful in embodying a style of leadership that is grounded in love and care and a great respect for everyone I interact with. My aim has always been to create space for First Nations, Tribal Councils and PTOs to advance their own priorities.

In terms of priorities, we have focused significant efforts in three main areas: organizational restructuring, ongoing federal/provincial government engagement, and balancing my regional work with my national portfolio, which includes the responsibilities of the AFN Women's Council, Education (K-12) and Housing/Infrastructure/Water.

In addition, work has been done on a number of high priority items, including development of a fair and appropriate funding formula, assisting communities preparing for the implementation of cannabis legislation, supporting our champions at the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians (AIAI) in stopping the Federal Recognition of Indigenous Rights Framework Legislation, initiating a strategic direction with the Political Confederacy, ensuring a Pre-Budget Submission to Ontario to minimize funding cutbacks to First Nations, and supporting/advocating for First Nation specific concerns.

Our work is only beginning. As we move forward on these priorities, and strengthen the Chiefs of Ontario, I am confident the net result will be a more measured and stronger organization, that will be better able to



respond to the needs and obligations that we have as First Nations people.

I look forward to continuing this work with the ongoing support of the Chiefs, citizens and partners of First Nations in Ontario.

Organizational Restructuring

This is a time of great transition and transformation in the Ontario Region. Over the past year, Chiefs of Ontario negotiated through a substantive budget deficit and many human resource challenges. However, through patience, vigilance, and a prudent and measured operational model, we have turned the corner in terms of organizational restructuring.

The Chiefs of Ontario is pleased to report that the organization has reduced all previous years' deficits to zero and we managed to post a surplus for the past fiscal year ending March 31, 2019. We started this new fiscal year with a clean slate and no debt. Although the organization has seen a reduction in staff, mostly due to funding reductions, we are grateful that the Chiefs of Ontario organization is well underway to stabilizing its human resources complement, and readjusting to achieve positive results and outcomes, with a new capacity. We acknowledge and thank our main funding partners, Indigenous Services Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Affairs. I'm grateful for their efforts and investments as this helped us to keep moving forward in restoring credibility to the Chiefs of Ontario.

Federal and Provincial Government Engagement

There has been a monumental shift in the Ontario Region since the election of Premier Doug Ford in June 2018. Whether it has been policy changes or enacting legislation, the Progressive Conservative government has been swift in their actions. Our calls to be properly engaged on matters that directly affect us seem to be an afterthought of the new Ontario government.

Since my election, I have tried to better understand this new political landscape, aligning First Nation regional priorities with provincial priorities, and infusing principle-based approaches to relationship building. Despite these efforts, there have been significant funding reductions under the recent budget released on April 11, 2019. This has served to compound the reductions to programs and funding that happened last summer. While some programs and services have been maintained with 10-15% reductions, we can only expect less funding in the future, as Ontario grapples with a massive deficit. Nevertheless, it is my ongoing objective to transform the traditional relationship between First Nations and the PC Party into one that is constructive, results-oriented and mutually beneficial. Overall, I have made close relationships with many Ministers, both federally and provincially. In particular, I've had regular communication with Minister Greg Rickford, Minister Seamus O'Regan, Minister Carolyn Bennett and Premier Doug Ford. I've attended a number of AFN meetings that included Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and members of his cabinet.





National Portfolio Work

AFN Women's Council and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

There is no greater priority for Indigenous women in Canada than addressing the legacy of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG). We know all too well, too many of our families, communities, and nations have felt the loss personally. After nearly three years, the National Inquiry into MMIWG has concluded and they released their long-anticipated final report titled "Reclaiming Power and Place". This 1,200 page document features 231 recommendations on how to rectify the wrong doings and government inaction on the issue, and to protect Indigenous women going forward. First, I want to acknowledge all the families, women's groups, and countless organizations who took part in this inquiry and, I would like you all to know we are standing behind you, and keeping the survivors and victims in our hearts. Now, it is essential to develop a collaborative and strong action plan to implement what have been called "legal imperatives."

Education (K-12)

We are at a significant crossroads for First Nations education, where we see the opportunity to act upon our respective and unique visions for the education of First Nations children and youth. I'm pleased to see that within the last year, the first steps towards closing the gap in education outcomes for First Nations children and students have been taken. Approximately \$665 million in funding for education was set aside in the 2016 federal budget, earmarked for "Transforming First Nation Education", and aims to replace outdated, proposal-

based programs with improved access to predictable core funding. While we welcome new federal commitments towards elementary and secondary learning, we must always be guided by the key principle of First Nations control of First Nations education. We remain hopeful that this new approach will be an important step toward the creation of new Treaty-based regional and/or local education agreements that will recognize and enable First Nations control over education to better meet the needs of students.

Water

Having a good quality of life begins with having clean, fresh, and accessible sources of water for each and every First Nation. This is an area of fundamental importance for too many communities living under long-term drinking water advisories. The AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly have renewed their calls for repeal and replacement of the *Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act* (SDWFNA) by focusing on holding the government to account in its commitment to lift all long-term drinking water advisories by March 2021. While we are supportive of this objective, First Nations views invoke the more fundamental question of addressing First Nations' infrastructure needs, and enabling systemic and holistic solutions, including providing significant increases in Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding, supporting First Nations in implementing Capital Asset Management approaches, and developing a sound legislative basis for sustained funding and protection of our First Nations' right to clean drinking water.

This year, we saw the tragic passing of renowned water protector, Biidaasige-baa Josephine Mandamin of Wiikwemkoong.

Grandmother Josephine, as she was affectionately known, began the Mother Earth Water Walk by walking around Lake Superior in 2003. Since that year, she led a flourishing movement to walk around all the Great Lakes and from all four directions of Turtle Island, to stand up and speak for the water. This spring, we also saw the passing of the torch to the next generation when Josephine's great-niece, Autumn Peltier, was appointed as the Chief Commissioner for the Anishinabek Nation Women's Water Commission.

Conclusion

I want to conclude with highlighting my supportive and collaborative work advocating for the progressive and visionary First Nations leaders across the region. I am incredibly passionate and driven about this part of my job, it is very rewarding. Although I was privileged to support First Nations across the region, much of the heavy lifting was done by others. Some of the successes include:

- A new ferry for the Beausoleil First Nation;
- An Interim Framework Agreement on housing for the Cat Lake First Nation;
- A Framework Agreement and work plan to relocate the Kashechewan First Nation;
- Supporting Grassy Narrows to seek justice for mercury poisoning;
- Supporting AIAI youth to "Stop the Framework";
- Supporting the Wauzhushk Onigum First Nation in their recent court battles with regard to gaming.

As Ontario Regional Chief, I will continue to focus on the goal of revitalizing the Chiefs of Ontario to become a healthy organization

that has a clear role of efficiently and effectively coordinating communication and shared efforts, while always operating in a respectful and cooperative manner with First Nations and their various organizations. Our efforts in restructuring will succeed and we will achieve this by finding a better way forward for the benefit of all First Nations across Ontario.

Finally, I want to reiterate—we are strong, and resilient. Together, we will move the obstacles from our path. We hold the vision of happy, healthy children, surrounded by the love of their families, and their own culture and language. We see them living in safe, vibrant communities, expressing their inherent Treaty and Indigenous rights, from now to the seventh generation.





Regional Chief Kevin Hart

Manitoba

It is a great honour to present my annual report as Regional Chief for the Manitoba Region for the Assembly of First Nations. The Manitoba Region has seen continued investments, infrastructure, and housing projects in many communities. Early Learning and Child Care has seen significant increases in funding, and new funding to First Nations that desperately need it. I would like to thank the National Chief, my fellow Regional Chiefs at the Executive level, Chiefs and leadership from the Manitoba Region, the National Advisory Committee on Child Welfare, Chiefs Committees, and the AFN staff and technicians.

As a member of the AFN Executive, I served as the portfolio holder for Housing and Infrastructure.

Housing

The Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure (CCoHI), which I lead with Co-Chair Chief Lance Haymond, continues to guide the work and priorities of the AFN Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services Sector. Since the 2018 Annual General Assembly (AGA), the CCoHI has met three times – October 29, 2018, December 3, 2018, and February 25, 2019. As a result of the Chiefs' approval of Resolution 57/2018, the 10 Year National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy was created. A key component of the Strategy is an AFN-led housing and related infrastructure data-gathering exercise which began in late 2018 and is being managed by regional First Nations organizations. The data analysis results will be presented in the fall of 2019. This will be the first, First Nation-led database on housing that will identify the real needs and costs in housing.

A Housing Think Tank, another key part of the Strategy, was held in Ottawa in late August 2018, on urban Indigenous housing providers.

I attended the National Housing and Infrastructure Forum held in Vancouver in October 2018. The theme of the Forum was "First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Developed by First Nations for First Nations". The Chiefs-in-Assembly directed us to reach out and include Indigenous housing providers and urban housing providers in this work. The collective task of the Forum was to improve the Draft 10 Year National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy. The Forum also provided an opportunity to share information and inform First Nations and create national momentum towards the transition to First Nations control of housing and infrastructure. Discussions focused on governance and delivery, funding and financing, skills and capacity development, innovative solutions, and the transition process.

In May 2019, the AFN Executive Committee met with the Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, in Ottawa to discuss the creation of a joint working committee to facilitate the exchange of information. The Minister asked Regional Chiefs to help him publicly push the provinces on proposing cost-shared infrastructure projects.

Habitat for Humanity continues to be an important issue for me. Habitat for Humanity's Grey Bruce will be building six more homes at Neyaashiinigiing. The partnership between the Chippewas of Nawash and Habitat's Grey Bruce plans to build 19 homes over five years.



Water

First Nations continue to face urgent unsafe drinking water issues and long-term drinking water advisories remain in effect in First Nations across the country. We continue to put pressure on the federal government to address these advisories and remind them of their promise to end all long-term boil-water advisories by March 2021.

The current Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act (SDWFNA) came into force in November 2013, without First Nations consultation. The Chiefs-in-Assembly have given us the mandate to seek repeal and replacement of this problematic legislation through co-development with First Nations and the federal government.

The National Engagement process with all First Nations in Canada has begun and is being led by the AFN Regions to ensure that the needs and aspirations of all First Nations are properly understood and incorporated into the co-developed repeal and replacement legislation.

The AFN hosted the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Think Tank in August 2018, in Ottawa. The Think Tank brought together First Nation Elders, leadership, legal, economic, and topic specific expertise, and water system implementation experts, technicians and representatives from organizations that are involved in water and wastewater safety and governance from across the country and internationally. Participants discussed the possible key operative elements and legal components of a First Nation safe drinking water and wastewater legislative framework, the components of water governance, and the

current status and approach to legislative co-development.

I attended the 2nd Annual National Water Symposium and Tradeshow in February 2019, in Niagara Falls, Ontario. Building on dialogue from the first symposium in 2018, this event heard from people across our Nations who are engaged in work related to sustainable water management, innovative technologies and training, climate change adaptation, and from people who are leading their own approaches to care and control of water and wastewater.

I wish to offer an acknowledgement of Rob Olivier, P.Eng, (August 13, 1970 – February 27, 2019), a Water and Wastewater Engineer with the Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation. Rob was a respected engineer at the First Nation, Tribal Council and national level, whose work touched the lives of many communities.

Operations and Maintenance

An Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Experts workshop was held in March 2018, to review existing policies, funding formulas, cost indices, and reporting requirements. Identify policy gaps and opportunities for improvement. Unanimous consensus from the workshop was that ISC and First Nations should initiate an Asset Management approach for community assets.

Operations & Maintenance (O&M) regional engagement has begun and as of June 19, 2019, engagements have been completed in all regions – British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Atlantic, Yukon and Northwest Territories.





Moving forward, we are seeking a commitment from the Crown to move to 100% funding for First Nations O&M needs to ensure that First Nations infrastructure will last.

In closing, with the upcoming federal election I strongly encourage everyone to get involved and make informed decisions. Enjoy your time with family and friends in your travels to the many powwows, ceremonies, and events everywhere.

*Yours in Brotherhood,
Regional Chief Kevin Hart*

Emergency Management

Disasters and emergency events hit First Nations more often and we feel the effects at a greater level, than neighbouring non-First Nations communities. First Nations are 18 times more likely to be evacuated due to these events than our Canadian neighbours. Our emergency management regimes are given to us from provincial and federal governments, and these regimes are not reflective of the realities in our communities, nor are they relevant to our cultures.

I attended the AFN Emergency Management Think Tank meeting held in Toronto in March 2019 with EM technicians from across the country. The objectives of the Think Tank included: providing information and discussing federal Emergency Management initiatives; seeking consensus on a common Emergency Management goal and vision for First Nations; and, discussing and providing input into a national work plan towards a national First Nations Emergency Management Strategy. This meeting was an important step toward the strategic planning and future development of an emergency management regime for all First Nations.



Regional Chief Bobby Cameron

Saskatchewan

Tansi, ʔedlanet'e, Hau, tonesked yaun?

Each and every time the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Executive has an opportunity to meet with provincial and federal leadership, and/or other political bodies, organizations, institutions or grassroots, our priority has always been and continues to be our inherent and Treaty rights, and First Nation jurisdiction. Advice from Traditional Knowledge Keepers balances and guides us in the right direction.

On behalf of the 74 member First Nations, and the FSIN Executive and staff, we would like to acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This is a territory covered by the Treaties of Peace and Friendship, which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) people signed with the British Crown in 1725. Treaties that did not surrender lands nor resources, but affirmed their rightful place as the original people of their ancestral and traditional territories.

We extend warm greetings to our Elders, leadership, youth, and citizens that are participating in the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) 40th Annual General Assembly. In my role as Regional Chief of Saskatchewan, and as a member of the Witchekan Lake First Nation, located in Treaty Six territory (northern Saskatchewan), I have spent the majority of my life maintaining strong ties to our culture, language, and identity.

This year, has been designated as the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages. After a long history of being outright prohibited, due to racism and discriminatory practices, our languages are slowly returning through revitalization projects, language

conferences, forums, and, more importantly, the classroom. We understand that schools have a significant influence over our children and they are the heart of our communities.

As leadership, we have a responsibility to ensure that our inherent and Treaty rights and First Nation jurisdiction is first, and foremost, protected and implemented through advocacy, and our due diligence is clearly centered on educating Canada and the world on the significance and contributions of First Nations people.

First Nation jurisdiction includes all of the sectors that fall under the umbrella of our inherent and Treaty rights; that is what we push for, advocate for, and strive for—the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations leadership will continue to ensure that they are honoured, respected, and that our First Nations continue to exercise their sovereignty.

Regional Update

I currently hold the following AFN portfolios:

- Health (Public Health, Chronic Diseases, Non-Insured Health Benefits)
- Management Committee
- Mental Health (Regional Chief Kluane Adamek – lead)
- Education (Post-Secondary Education – lead)

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Community/Grassroots Engagement

Each year, the FSIN Executive takes the opportunity to visit the Treaty territories and traditional lands that comprise Saskatchewan, with a First Nation membership of more than 160,000, in





efforts to build relationships and maintain strong ties to each community. We understand and know that maintaining a connection with the 74 member First Nations is powered by culture and tradition, and that our path to self-determination comes with many obstacles. We will continue to maintain these connections, and encourage our First Nations people to convey, advocate, and claim their rightful place as Inherent and Treaty Right partners across Turtle Island.

Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10 cover the area of Saskatchewan. Within these territories, 74 member First Nations include the Denesuliné, Saulteaux, Cree (Woodland, Swampy, Plains, Rock), Nakota, Dakota, and Lakota. Cultural and traditional practices that allow community membership, invited guests, and those involved in ceremonies to participate and share their combined traditional knowledge has been practiced long before signing of Treaty began. These events happen over the course of spring, summer, fall, and winter depending on the First Nation.

Public Health, Chronic Diseases and Non-Insured Health Benefits

The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations participates in the AFN National First Nations Health Technicians Network, providing technical input on issues, including health transformation, public health, chronic diseases, and Non-Insured Health Benefits.

First Nations leadership and technicians, along with the FSIN, participated in the AFN's 2018 Health Transformation Summit, where the following common position on Health Transformation was presented: *"It is time for a change. It is time for a Transformed*

First Nations Health Care system that is based on Inherent and Treaty Rights, and fulfills Treaty commitment to realizing the true spirit and intent of the Medicine Chest. A Government to Government agreement must be produced by First Nations people for First Nations people that is comprehensive in approach, responsive to community identified priorities, and sustainable."

The FSIN advocates this position and includes that health transformation must address the transition of administration and control of the public health role to First Nations, in a sustainable and needs based approach. In going forward, we also raised the need for a chronic disease strategy to the AFN that includes health promotion for early diagnosis through testing, eliminating barriers to treatment access, including dialysis services closer to home, and prevention through health and wellness programs and services.

The FSIN has also advised on the inadequacies of the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program, including denials of pharmaceuticals, dental, optometry, and necessary medical equipment and supplies. The FSIN provides advocacy support to First Nations who encounter barriers to accessing Non-Insured Health Benefits and health services.

United Nations

The FSIN supports and facilitates the submission of interventions to the United Nations through the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. On April 18, 2018, the FSIN Office of the Chief assisted the family of the late Colten Boushie in delivering a powerful statement calling for justice and for

a Royal Commission to eliminate racism in the justice system.

On April 19, 2018, on behalf of the Office of the Chief, Vice Chief David Pratt asked the United Nations to call on the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church to apologize for the Church's role in residential schools, to re-establish the healing fund for survivors of residential schools, and to rescind the Papal bull that was used to justify the slaughter, oppression, and appropriation of lands of Indigenous peoples around the world.

Emergency Management

On May 24, 2018, the FSIN Chiefs-in-Assembly established the FSIN Chiefs Task Force on Emergency Management through a resolution. In addition to establishing the task force, the resolution also mandated formally engaging Saskatchewan First Nations on emergency management, to identify gaps and deficiencies in service delivery, as well as the general state of preparedness of First Nations for state of emergency events.

After meeting with most Saskatchewan First Nations through the formal engagement, FSIN has formulated 13 recommendations for the improvement of First Nations emergency response management, which reflect aspirations for the jurisdiction of service delivery.

The FSIN will continue to work diligently in following up on these recommendations with the goal of implementing these recommendations for improved First Nations Emergency Response Management.

Child Welfare

Recent focus on the introduction of Bill C-92, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, has been led by a FSIN Chiefs Political Task Force on Child Welfare (CPTFCW). On May 24, 2018, a resolution was carried by the Legislative Assembly for the CPTFCW to change its composition to include more equal leadership representation from throughout the region and continue this work. First Nations in Saskatchewan consistently take the position that "Inherent Rights and Powers for Self-Determination and Self-Government" include powers that are associated with the following: the powers to determine our form of government; the powers to determine our form of justice; the powers to determine our form of laws; and the powers to determine our internal affairs.

The CPTFCW directed the FSIN to have a Saskatchewan Position Paper on Child Welfare Legislation, and have a collective Saskatchewan position. This was approved by resolution at the Chiefs Special Assembly on Child Welfare on November 28, 2018. The CPTFCW has passed motions approving Bill C-92 in principle, pending the inclusion of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and funding mechanisms, as well as a motion accepting Bill C-92 as-is, for the time being, and then bringing up the issues again, during the review period, after it passes. The FSIN continues to advocate for the Chiefs and First Nations of Saskatchewan to ensure that the recommendations provided are taken forward to the federal government.





National Education Portfolio

Post-Secondary Education (PSE)

In July 2018, the AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 29/2018, *First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review Report and Recommendations*, soon to be followed by Resolution 48/2018, *First Nations Post-Secondary Education Policy Proposal*, which supports the co-developed First Nations PSE policy proposal to be presented to Cabinet through an Indigenous Services Canada's (ISC) Memorandum to Cabinet (MC). The Policy Proposal reaffirms the Inherent and Treaty Right to post-secondary education; that each First Nation has jurisdiction over their education; and states that the process would not hinder, nor detract from any other processes.

In response to the policy proposal and through Budget 2019, the Government of Canada provided \$327.5 million, in additional funding over five years, to renew and expand the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP), while the Government engages with First Nations on the development of long-term First Nations-led PSE models. Although, the funding fell short of the \$1.07 billion required to close the gap in PSE, the approval of the policy proposal confirmed support for First Nations-led, Treaty and/or regional based processes to develop models that will best support First Nations PSE. Alongside the approval of Treaty and/or regional based PSE models, Budget 2019 provided \$7.5 million over three years that will support First Nations to have exploratory discussions, engagement, partnership tables, and model design with their members. First Nations will begin to transition from current restrictions in PSE to

more holistic approaches that support the unique needs of every Nation.

National Indian Education Council (NIEC)

K-12 Education – In December 2017, the co-development of the K-12 Transformation Policy Proposal was passed by Chiefs-in-Assembly via AFN Resolution 65/2017, *New Interim Funding Approach for First Nations Education*, and moved through Cabinet in an MC. The policy proposal sought changes to First Nations K-12 education policy including:

- Replacing ISC's outdated, inefficient, and inadequate proposal-based education programs with regional education approaches and funding models that provide sufficient, predictable, and sustainable funding.
- Supporting First Nations Regions to develop their own education funding model that uses the education funding model of that province as a base calculation, plus adaptations and additions that provide funding for the unique needs of First Nations students, communities, and schools.

With K-12 Education Transformation, First Nations now have the opportunity to develop Regional Education Agreements (REAs), which are new education funding agreements that can be negotiated locally, regionally and/or by Treaty territory. REAs use the provincial education funding model as a base calculation, plus adaptations, that provide funding for the unique needs of First Nation students, communities and schools. At the same time, First Nations across the country are currently engaging in regional technical table meetings to further examine their regional interim formulas that will fund First Nation education for those that are not

in an REA, block, or self-government agreement.

On April 1, 2019, the series of new interim regional funding models for elementary and secondary education were implemented and replaced the federal, proposal-based programs.

Research and Innovation – Regions were asked to determine their preferred regional approaches to administering the program, with the majority of regions electing that First Nations in the region will fully manage the process, including identifying themes, setting criteria, call out, and selection committee.

Regions recommended one of the two following funding allocation options:

- i. Per capita distribution of funds (based on population or nominal roll).
- ii. Base allocation plus per capita distribution of funds.

Chiefs Committee on Education

Throughout the year the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) provided direction to the NIEC on the way forward in all areas including the K-12 Education Transformation, Education Research and Innovation Programs, and Post-Secondary Education. K-12 Transformation eliminated most proposal-based funding; however, the following will remain available:

- 1) Research and Learning & Innovations in Education Program;
- 2) A component of the High Cost Special Education Program;
- 3) The Education Partnerships Program.

In December 2018, the CCOE recommended the AFN work with ISC to finalize the Research and Learning & Innovations in Education Program Guidelines. This program was once an ISC national selection process. With the new program guidelines, First Nations will have control over the funds and will implement the programs using their preferred regional allocation methodology.

In April 2019, the CCOE passed a motion for the NIEC to co-develop with ISC new program guidelines for the Education Partnership Program that is First Nations led and to ensure that they are in place by 2020/2021.

The CCOE continues to advocate for First Nations control of First Nations education.

Treaty Governance Office

The Treaty Governance Office (TGO) is mandated by the Indian Government Commission and Chiefs-in-Assembly to work on the enforcement of Treaty and Inherent rights. It is funded by a contribution from the Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNA) Treaties and Aboriginal Government Sector.

The FSIN and the Treaty Governance Office continue to work with Canada on furthering the nation-to-nation relationship through a bilateral Treaty Table process facilitated by the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. The Treaty Table meets three times per year, and has a mandate to identify options and make recommendations to assist in resolving issues that affect the Treaty relationship. The parties agreed on an annual work plan using the work of the Treaty Table as a base.





The Treaty Governance Office work involves: coordinating the work of the FSIN Secretariats at the Treaty Table;

- coordinating the work of the FSIN Secretariats at the Treaty Table;
- maintaining communication and liaison with First Nations and Tribal Councils on Treaty and inherent rights-related issues;
- making recommendations on policies and processes for Treaty and Inherent rights enforcement to First Nations and Canada;
- participating in Treaty area discussions and assisting in coordinating and participating in all Treaty-related forums; and
- maintaining awareness on Treaties and the Treaty Relationship by continually reviewing materials developed by all parties on the nation-to-nation relationship.

The TGO also focused on major initiatives in regards to nation building, justice, citizenship, and fiscal relations.

The TGO is also part of the Advisory Group on First Nations Governance, put together by the Ottawa-based Institute on Governance and the BC-based First Nations Financial Management Board, to research and develop governance frameworks, standards, and curriculum to support First Nations in the nation-to-nation relationship. The TGO is advocating for an Institute of Law and Governance to be housed at the First Nations University of Canada (FNUC).

The Treaty Governance Office engaged on the Collaborative Process on Bill S-3 to examine broader issues relating to Status Indian Registration, Band Membership, and citizenship. During this process, the TGO seized every opportunity to target

participation, through different activities with Saskatchewan's First Nations, Tribal/ Agency/Grand Councils and Treaty area groups, for their input on their understanding of citizenship in the past, present, and future. Going forward, the TGO will continue to work on research and developments in the citizenship file; create awareness and understanding in coordination with other nation-building efforts; and monitor and communicate with other organizations and initiatives in the area of citizenship.

Housing

The Treaty Right to Shelter has been problematic for decades. The gap between living conditions on First Nations and off-reserve communities has been well documented, and to be successful in addressing the First Nations housing crisis throughout Saskatchewan, collaboration between experts, professionals, and government on a housing strategy that is developed and controlled by First Nations is imminent.

The FSIN, along with the Chiefs Task Force, will continue to work with a technical working group and First Nations both on and off-reserve and look at developing an authority in Saskatchewan that will address long-standing issues in housing.

The Chiefs-in-Assembly mandates include Resolution #2066, *FSIN Housing Mandate and Political Strategy*, to direct the members responsible for Housing to develop a plan and political strategy using existing resources. This will give Saskatchewan First Nations more control over the design, delivery, administration, and control of First Nation Housing.

Resolution #2098 mandates the Chiefs-in-Assembly to establish a Chiefs Task Force on Housing and Infrastructure to direct an engagement strategy with First Nations in Saskatchewan, based on the procedures established in the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations Consultation Policy, to explore options, and develop models for First Nations governance and jurisdiction over Housing and Infrastructure.

Ongoing meetings with ISC, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the Chiefs Task Force, and the technical working group will be set up with all 74 member First Nations over the next two years, to begin the discussion on how the design, delivery, administration, and control of First Nations Housing will be developed and disseminated.

Training for the technical working group took place in January 2019, followed by the survey questionnaire, which took place with communities to identify gaps and needs in housing, the current housing stock, and future housing needs.

Lands and Resources

Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources

The Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources meets regularly with the focus on three main areas: Specific Claims, Additions to Reserve (ATR), and Comprehensive Claims.

On Specific Claims, the Chiefs Committee has given the AFN, as members of the Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG), the direction and support to create engagement on an independent Specific Claims process.

This engagement will be carried out through the regions.

There are still frustrations with the Additions to Reserve file. Saskatchewan continues to be the most successful region in the country in transferring land to reserve, but there are still areas of difficulty, including dealing with third parties and resourcing issues at the regional office. Canada has proposed to extend the Prairie Claim Settlement legislation to other parts of the country and to other categories of ATR. This would allow Saskatchewan First Nations with ATR, not tied to a settlement agreement or a Specific Claims Tribunal award, to use the tools in the Prairie Claims Settlement.

Since all but the Dakota/Lakota Nations in Saskatchewan are Treaty, the comprehensive claims work is mostly focused on BC and potentially Quebec.

Joe Wild, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Treaties and Aboriginal Government, Crown-Indigenous Relations attended the meeting in Edmonton and presented on the Rights Recognition Framework.

Presentations on Specific Claims, ATR, and Comprehensive Claims were made at the AFN National Four Policies and Nation Building Forum on May 1, 2019.

Joint Technical Working Group Specific Claims

In December 2018, Cabinet gave their approval for AFN engagement with the regions on an independent Specific Claims process. However, the federal budget did not contain funding for engagement, so it had to be found internally. Now that Canada has secured funding, engagement should occur in





the regions in the summer and fall. The JTWG is set to meet on June 12, 2019, in Toronto, ON, and July 3–4, 2019, in Vancouver, BC. These meetings will map out how the engagement will be rolled out. We intend to provide the same information tailored to each region, specifically. Ron Maurice of Maurice Law has been selected to lead the engagement.

First Nations Advisory Committee on Species at Risk

The National Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk and the *Species at Risk Act, 2002* (SARA) recognize the important role of Indigenous peoples in the implementation of the Act for the protection and conservation of species-at-risk and their associated habitat. The SARA established the National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk (NACOSAR) and the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council (CESCC), and in Section 9, it provides for other advisory committees to parallel the SARA more closely.

The AFN and the Government of Canada committed to position First Nations as leaders of environmental initiatives, and to ensure that First Nations are full and effective partners in support of species/habitat protection, and conservation goals and objectives. This commitment does not replace or alleviate the Crown of its duty-to-consult First Nations at local, regional, and national levels on issues related to species and habitat protection and conservation. The First Nations Advisory Committee on Species at Risk (FNACSAR) was created to serve as an advisory body to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), and will maintain a direct linkage to the AFN's Advisory Committee on Climate

Action and the Environment (ACCAE), and National Fisheries Committee (NFC).

In March 2018, strategic planning was done and policies were developed for the FNACSAR. Informational meetings were held with the FNACSAR and the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) prior to the listing of species.

The Pan-Canadian approach to Species at Risk conservation was introduced to the committee, Canada's Nature Fund, and in working with Parks Canada.

AFN National Fisheries Committee

The National Fisheries Committee (NFC) is comprised of Chiefs and technicians from coastal, inland, freshwater, and northern regions that work to address issues in fisheries, aquaculture, and the oceans sectors. The NFC met on February 26–27, 2019, in Ottawa, ON, and discussed various issues from different regions and First Nations. The focus was to prepare for a meeting with the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, on February 27, 2019. Some of the issues discussed at this meeting included: the need to implement Supreme Court Decisions; support for the Fraser Salmon Management Council; reform of the Freshwater Fisheries Marketing Corporation (FFMC) and the need for First Nations engagement on the issue; funding for Inland and Freshwater Fisheries Working Group, consisting of 395 inland First Nations across six regions, with a noticeable gap in funding programs; First Nations' co-development of an Aquaculture Act, which needs funding for meaningful engagement, and representation on the task group of Canadian Council of Fisheries and

Aquaculture Ministers; implementation of the Oceans Protection Plan; concern of competitive project proposals with Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management (AAROM) program renewal; concern for the lack of First Nations input in the definition of DFO Arctic Region and the need for the inclusion of the Dene; and the funding request for an AFN National Fisheries Forum in 2019.

A first-ever Ministers Round Table was held in April 2019 between the Species at Risk Advisory Committee, the National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk, and the First Nations Advisory Committee on Species at Risk with the Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and the Honourable Johnathan Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard.

Natural Resource Transfer Agreement
On April 11, 2018, the AFN hosted a Lands and Resources Gathering in Winnipeg, Manitoba related to the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement (NRTA). As a follow up, on May 1, 2018, the FSIN hosted a meeting held in Gatineau, Quebec, during the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly, where a draft NRTA Secretariat proposal was circulated.

On May 10, 2018, the FSIN Lands and Resources Commission adopted a motion providing its support to the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC) to continue the work, as it relates to the NRTA. Lands and Resources staff have been assisting PAGC on their scheduled NRTA Summit to be held on August 13–15, 2019, in Prince Albert, SK. The NRTA Summit will include western Treaty First Nations and there will be further discussions on the creation of the NRTA Secretariat, which would be responsible for

coordinating political and legal efforts on behalf of First Nations.

The FSIN Lands and Resources Commission has directed staff to work with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC) on research related to resource revenue sharing and impact benefit agreements.

Conclusion

In conclusion, these are just some of our top priorities for all sectors that fall under the umbrella of our Inherent and Treaty Rights. Our leaders and our First Nations look to the Assembly of First Nations to advocate and facilitate when they are needed; it is through our leaders we take our direction as an Executive. I look forward to continuing to come together, to share concerns, and address issues. In unity, we will be effective in our work for our Nations, our communities, and our future generations.

Hiy Hiy, ekosi

*Regional Chief Bobby Cameron, AFN
Chief – Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN)
Witcheken First Nation, Treaty No. 6 Territory*





Regional Chief Marlene Poitras

Alberta

Tansi. It is my pleasure to provide this submission for the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) 2019 Annual Report.

I was honoured to be elected on February 22, 2018, by the Treaty No. 6, Treaty No. 7, and Treaty No. 8 Chiefs of Alberta, as the first woman to hold the position of AFN Regional Chief. I am a member of the Mikisew Cree Nation, and a direct descendant of Mikisew, who signed the adhesion to Treaty No. 8 in 1899. I have spent most of my career working with Indigenous communities, organizations, industry, and government across Canada and internationally in areas of management, policy analysis, research, and advocacy with a focus on health and Treaty rights.

My focus over this past year has been on meeting with Treaty Chiefs in my region, finding avenues to move their issues forward and supporting their right to self-determination. The implementation of Treaty according to its true spirit and intent has been my repeated message to government, as well as the need to meet with First Nations leaders directly to develop a true nation-to-nation relationship.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

AFN Regional Chief Portfolios

My AFN portfolios this past fiscal year included the Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources (CCoLTR), International Treaties, the Management Committee, and Emergency Management. I have been pleased to share the international portfolio with National Chief Bellegarde. This year, Emergency Management will be transferred to the Housing and Infrastructure portfolio to create more synergy.

Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources

A Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources (CCoLTR) meeting was held February 7, 2019, in Ottawa. Committee members were provided a briefing on the Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) proposed engagement plan on the Comprehensive Claims and Inherent Rights Policy. The Committee found that Canada's approach was simply an extension of their failed Recognition of Rights Framework process, and that the timelines proposed were unrealistic and inconsistent with the First Nations-led process. It was agreed that the National Chief would send a letter to CIRNAC advising the government that First Nations cannot accept Canada's timelines and any process that has pre-determined outcomes.

AFN Resolution 67/2018, *Rejection of the Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework and Associated Processes*, called on the AFN to host a forum to identify principles that can help guide our collective efforts with the Crown. As Chair of the CCoLTR, I was pleased to host the Four Policies and Nation-Building Forum, on May 1-2, 2019, in Edmonton, AB. The Forum was an opportunity for First Nations to discuss the larger context around land, title and jurisdiction; identify common principles; and provide updates on the AFN's work on the four key policies: Specific Claims, Inherent Right Policy, Comprehensive Claims and Additions to Reserve.

International Treaties

At the December 2018 Special Chiefs Assembly in Ottawa, I was pleased to host a



meeting with Numbered Treaty leaders and citizens, hear their viewpoints on Treaty implementation, and their suggestions on how the AFN could support their work. It is clear that work must be led by Treaty First Nations, and the role of the AFN is to provide logistical support and sustained advocacy.

I was also pleased to be invited to the Dene National Assembly to hear the Dene Nation's viewpoints on Treaty as well as other matters such as the environment and climate change.

A Treaty Nation in Alberta has indicated their willingness to host a National Gathering on International Treaties; however, funding needs to be confirmed for work to begin on the file.

International Portfolio

I travelled to Geneva in March 2019, to participate in the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Thirty-Ninth Session of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC). The IGC hosted a five-day meeting in Geneva on Traditional Knowledge/Traditional Cultural Expressions. In my closing statements on behalf of the Indigenous Caucus, I stated that the existing intellectual property regime does not adequately protect the Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Traditional Cultural Expressions (TCE) of Indigenous Peoples, and I called for a new set of standards reflecting Indigenous Peoples' collective cultural and social rights, and that any new regime must support Indigenous Nations' authority over their cultures, and their spiritual, moral, and economic rights.

Treaty Rights Protection, Jurisdiction and Authority

Treaty No. 6, Treaty No. 7, and Treaty No. 8 (Alberta) Chiefs derive their authority from the Creator and the citizens of their respective Nations/Tribes. The exercise of their inherent authority and Treaty rights makes them beneficiaries of all aspects of international law, including, but not limited to, the Charter of the United Nations, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Organization of American States (OAS) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169. They have the right to pass resolutions and directives for their representative organizations.

Treaty No. 6, Treaty No. 7, and Treaty No. 8 are sacred international agreements that outline the Treaty relationship between Indigenous Nations, the Crown, and its successor state. Treaty Chiefs continue to assert their Treaty rights, including the Treaty right to health and education. The Treaty right to education includes lifelong learning, not just Kindergarten to grade 12. Chiefs have also called for a long-term Treaty-based funding strategy on Indigenous post-secondary institutions.

Children and Families – The Assembly of Treaty Chiefs resolved to reject the federal and provincial engagement processes on children and family legislation and policies, they affirmed their jurisdiction and authority to make laws on behalf of their citizens, committed to the development of Treaty-based wellness legislation, and called on the governments of Canada and Alberta to work directly with First Nations, within a transparent and inclusive process.





Citizenship – Treaty Peoples in Alberta did not consent to the extinguishment of their right to preside over matters that concern their Nations, including membership and citizenship. They do not agree with the current collaborative process on Indian registration, band membership, and citizenship. They continue to assert their Treaty and Inherent rights. In addition, Treaty First Nations did not consent to status cards as it pertains to their citizens and have called for the immediate reinstatement of Treaty cards.

Key Priorities for the Coming Year

Lands, Territories and Resources

The federal budget included \$40 million over 5 years for Specific Claims research funding. The budget also included a commitment to forgive and repay all loans accrued by First Nations negotiating Comprehensive Claims. That's a positive step forward, and hopefully opens the door for something similar with Specific Claims. However, there remains uncertainty regarding funding for Specific Claims engagement in an independent process. We will need to speak to CIRNAC to determine if this funding was included in the budget. We will be holding a Specific Claims Joint Technical Working Group to discuss this. On Additions to Reserve (ATR), we will need to establish a working group with Canada and re-invigorate the discussions.

Charter Renewal

Renewing the AFN's Charter has been added to my portfolio. As noted in Resolution 02/2017, Chiefs Committee on AFN Charter Renewal, there has been an evolution in the social, political, legal and constitutional status of First Nations, since the AFN was first established in 1982. The AFN has resolved to be responsive to the changing

political landscape, and will be consulting with First Nations across Canada about the role and structure of the AFN to make the organization more representative of First Nations and all their citizens, regardless of where they reside or their status under the Indian Act. The process will include meetings, website materials, questionnaires, and presentations at Assemblies. It is estimated the process will take approximately two years and be conducted in a phased approach.

International Treaties

I will continue to advocate and push for resources to support the work of Treaties 1-11 and advocate for positive movement as they determine their own path forward.

Supporting Regional Leadership and Governance Capacity

My office will continue to identify resources to support the implementation of AFN Alberta's Strategic Plan to support regional leadership and governance capacity, host, and participate in regional dialogue sessions on key issues, provide briefs, and coordinate and share research on Indigenous governance and governance tools with First Nations leaders.

Women and Youth

Building the leadership capacity of First Nations women and youth has been a personal priority this past year. We will be hiring a Youth Coordinator who will be tasked with establishing a Regional Youth Council, and supporting community-based leadership for First Nations Youth in Alberta. The Regional Youth Council will provide opportunities for learning and mentorship from First Nations, government, and business leaders; coordinate youth gatherings and learning opportunities on a

range of issues; and encourage the creation of community infrastructure and youth seats on Council. We will also provide access to participate in political organizations and share information on toolkits, educational internships, and fellowship opportunities.

We have hired a coordinator to implement an Indigenous Women and Girls Mentorship Project. Indigenous women, young and old, will be paired with an elected Indigenous woman within the province. This pairing will include mentorship, skills development, and job shadowing to allow the participants a unique opportunity to learn from their mentor. These unique perspectives will allow the participants to gather tools, learn first-hand a new role, and develop strategies to challenge outdated patriarchal policies and approaches in Indigenous communities. In addition, I pledge my support for the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation's call for a public inquiry into the forced sterilization of Indigenous women.

Operations and Maintenance Review & Water Legislation Engagement

The AFN Infrastructure Sector, in close collaboration with First Nations experts in operations and maintenance, is carrying out a review of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Operations and Maintenance Policy. We will be hosting an engagement session targeting operations and maintenance experts working in Tribal Councils or in First Nations public works departments.

In close collaboration with AFN Regions and Chiefs in Canada, the AFN Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Management Services Sector is undertaking regional engagement sessions to ensure First Nations are informed, endorse, and support the development of a new legislative framework

for First Nations safe drinking water and sanitation. We will be hosting a two-day engagement session with Chiefs/Proxies and a water and sanitation technician from each Alberta First Nation.

Conclusion

I very much appreciate the opportunity to work for the Treaty Chiefs of Alberta and with my colleagues across Turtle Island. Thank you.

Hai Hai, Nanaskomtin

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





Regional Chief Terry Teegee

British Columbia

Welcome Chiefs, Leaders, Elders, Women, Youth, and community members to the AFN Annual General Assembly taking place on Wolastoqiyik Territory in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

As the Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief for British Columbia (BCAFN), and on behalf of the BCAFN First Nations and Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to provide you with this report from the BC region. Our region includes 203 First Nations, some with historic and modern treaties, some with unceded lands and resources, and is home to the Tsilhqot'in, which retains its Aboriginal title.

I am from the Takla Lake First Nation, a member of the Lax Gibuu clan, and I carry the hereditary name of Maxweem Tsinghee. I have been married for 13 years to my wife, Rena Zatorski, and we have two children, our daughter Rylie and son Rowan. We live on the Lheidli T'enneh reserve, located 22 kilometers from the city of Prince George.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

I have committed myself to work tirelessly for First Nations in BC, and will focus work in four areas of priority throughout my mandate, including:

- The BCAFN: Establish Relationships
- Education: Securing our Future Generations
- Economic Development
- Children and Families Matter

On March 7-8, 2019, the BCAFN Special Chiefs Assembly was held at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology on Nlaka'pamux and Syilx Territory. The agenda for this two-day meeting included items

such as the work of the BCAFN Governance Committee, updates on Children and Families, Languages legislation, the BCAFN Economic Strategy, climate change, federal policies on comprehensive claims, specific claims, and inherent rights, updates from the Forestry, Fisheries, Housing and Infrastructure, and Justice Councils, progress on implementing the Commitment Document, including Provincial legislation on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, gaming revenue sharing, and cannabis. Several resolutions were passed.

NUMBER	NAME
01/2019	SUPPORT FOR BILL C-92: AN ACT RESPECTING FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND MÉTIS CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
02/2019	BC ABORIGINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL TRANSITION
03/2019	SUPPORT FOR BILL C-91: AN ACT RESPECTING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES
04/2019	CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BC FIRST NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY
05/2019	APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ON AN INTERIM BASIS
06/2019	APPOINTMENT OF ELECTIONS APPEAL COMMITTEE ON AN INTERIM BASIS
07(a-i)/2019	OMNIBUS RESOLUTION TO ADOPT NINE RESOLUTIONS



07(a)/2019:	CALL FOR A PUBLIC INQUIRY ON CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ORGANIZED CRIME, MONEY LAUNDERING AND THE OPIOID AND AFFORDABILITY CRISES	S-3 AND THE REMOVAL OF SEX-BASED DISCRIMINATION FROM THE INDIAN ACT
07(b)/2019:	SUPPORT TO ESTABLISH A TRIPARTITE LABOUR MARKET SKILLS STEERING COMMITTEE FOR FIRST NATIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA	07(h)/2019: APPOINTMENT OF THE POSITION OF DIRECTOR ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BC FIRST NATIONS GAMING REVENUE SHARING GENERAL PARTNER INC.
07(c)/2019:	CALL ON FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND RESPECT COMMUNITY BASED COLLABORATIVE APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENT FOR INDIGENOUS URBAN AND OFF RESERVE CITIZENS (INCLUDING NON-STATUS AND NON-AFFILIATED)	07(i)/2019: FIRST NATIONS HOUSING OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

Federal Legislation

The BC region has taken a strong position on several key legislative initiatives including:

- Bill C-262: *An Act to ensure that the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;*
- Bill C-91: *An Act respecting Indigenous Languages;*
- Bill C-92: *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families;*
- Bill C-69: *An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts; and,*
- Bill C-48: *An Act respecting the regulation of vessels that transport crude oil or persistent oil to or from ports or marine installations located along British Columbia's north coast.*

07(d)/2019:	ALL CHIEFS' AND LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE SESSION ON OVERLAP AND SHARED TERRITORY
07(e)/2019:	FAIR AND EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR FIRST NATIONS TO CREDIT RATING SYSTEM
07(f)/2019:	RIGHT TO ACCESS INTERNATIONAL MARKETS AND TRADE
07(g)/2019:	IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION OF BILL

First Nations leaders from BC have had opportunities to provide written and oral submissions related to all of these legislative pieces. Chiefs have consistently said that





First Nations must be a party to legislative reform through co-drafting these laws, and their related policies and regulations.

Provincial Legislation

The BCAFN works with the First Nations Summit and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs in a political alliance. Called the BC First Nations Leadership Council, it advocates strongly for legislative changes in the provincial legislative landscape and has been successful with the reformed *Provincial Environmental Assessment Act*, as well as its continued work to ensure that provincial legislation is passed by that will recognize and implement the standards and principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Progress is also being made on several areas of jurisdiction, including child welfare, cannabis, gaming revenue sharing, and housing/infrastructure.

Fisheries

As the Co-chair of the AFN National Fisheries Committee, I have worked with the other members to develop a secretariat to implement Supreme Court of Canada decisions as they relate to First Nations' fishing rights. As per Resolution 61/2018, *Respect, Protection, and Preservation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems*, passed at the December 2018 AFN Special Chiefs Assembly, the AFN will work to support the respect, protection, and preservation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), including in the context of fisheries, through federal, provincial and territorial advocacy, and coordinating the development of an IKS Framework. This will include calling upon the relevant Ministers to provide adequate funding directly to individual First Nations, to support the protection, practice,

preservation, and promotion of IKS for future generations.

Economic Development

As Chair of the Chiefs Committee on Economic Development, I have worked with the other members to move forward on:

- Development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the federal government for more resources for First Nations to support capacity-building and growth in their economic initiatives;
- Development of a paper regarding First Nations procurement; and,
- Negotiations with Natural Resources Canada to hold engagement sessions with First Nations.

The BCAFN held its Business Forum in February 2019, which highlighted achievements made thus far in our sustainable economic development work. We continue to work in partnership with the Provincial government to map out a strategic future with respect to the outcomes and deliverables expected.

Work remains underway and will remain ongoing throughout this fiscal year, and into 2020/21, following the provincial government's commitment to support the work of First Nations in BC and their endeavors to pursue their economic development goals. The BCAFN remains committed to ensuring the deliverables of the agreement are complete. Below is an update on the work currently underway on the Strategy's key deliverables.

BC Business Council Champions Table

The Champions Table has been meeting regularly and there are two new members on

the Champions Table, Chief Mike Lebourdais and Chief John French. There are 11 First Nations leaders and 11 CEOs at the Table, and it is guided by a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the BCAFN and the BC Business Council (BCBC) in 2017. The MOU establishes the relationship and defines the goal of this work to "Recognize and Accelerate the Opportunities and Economic Reconciliation between First Nations and the Business Community in British Columbia."

Other aspects of the MOU focus on respectfully engaging to create a formal, ongoing dialogue between First Nations and business leaders to discuss sustainable economic reconciliation. This will include building greater capacity, clarity and certainty in decision making, stronger relationships, and tangible solutions for First Nations, governments and business to act upon.

Areas of work stemming from the Champions Table include the Indigenous Intern Leadership Program, a partnership between BCBC, BCAFN, and the Vancouver Island University. This program matches Indigenous graduates with internships at prominent BC businesses. It is administered through the Vancouver Island University, but is open to students from any post-secondary institution in BC. Another area of work involves bringing the expertise and insight from the Table to the opportunity that exists for the Tsilhqot'in, and their recognized title in their territory.

The Black Books

The Black Books were released in mid-June, and are intended to fill a gap with respect to building capacity at the community level for

economic development. They are a toolkit that provides context and tools to support and prepare First Nations communities advancing their economies. There are three key audiences, each having their own book. This significant piece of work stems from feedback from First Nations in BC gathered over three years and over 20 regional sessions. These Black Books are available to First Nations for free, accessible on the BCAFN website (www.bcafn.ca).

International Indigenous Trade and Investment Organization (IITIO)

As Regional Chief, I participated in the 6th International Indigenous Trade and Investment Organization conference that took place on June 2–4, 2019, at the University of Oklahoma. This event shared successes and education on international, inter-tribal trade and investment. The conference brought together Indigenous business representatives, economic development officers and leadership with international experts in Indigenous trade law.

In addition to the opportunity to visit some of the Oklahoma Tribes and see their business operations, traders and experts came together to plan and participate in discussions on the global flow and exchange of Indigenous goods, services and investments. During the conference we heard from leading experts in the fields of trade law, international trade finance, supply logistics and Indigenous history, in addition to authorities from Indigenous business and tribal economic development. We engaged more specifically on key areas such as Indigenous international trade provisions, the Jay Treaty, NAFTA, crossing the Canada/USA border for Indigenous trade, and developing real Indigenous trade





opportunities between New Zealand, Canada and the United States.

An area for further discussion and exploration is the creation and expansion of Indigenous Free-Trade Zones globally, which provide Indigenous Nations the opportunity to exercise further control, and capitalize on the benefits of this proven model for international trade.

Non-Medical Cannabis Legalization and Regulation

The BCAFN continues to participate in the Joint Cannabis Working Group with the Provincial Cannabis Secretariat. On March 27, 2019, the First Nations Leadership Council hosted the first BC First Nations Cannabis Forum to discuss and share information on jurisdiction and law, health and social impacts, and economic development opportunities in the cannabis sector. Based on this work, the First Nations Leadership Council and community representatives will be advancing a work plan with the province. Some of the first priorities of the work plan will be enhancing First Nations participation in the economy, and promoting health and well-being.

The AFN will be holding a National Cannabis Summit from September 4–5, 2019, in Vancouver, BC to discuss how First Nations rights and interests can be implemented in relation to non-medical cannabis. At the December 2018 AFN Special Chiefs Assembly, Resolution 90/2018, *First Nations Cannabis Jurisdiction*, was passed to support First Nations' jurisdiction over cannabis and its taxation on our lands. This continues to be a priority nationally and in BC.

Conclusion

With the federal election around the corner, we must encourage our community members, families and friends to exercise their right to vote. We may be disappointed with past governments; however, we must utilize our power at the ballot box to actively participate in protecting our rights. We continue to work hard to advance First Nations interests and priorities and we shall continue to do so, while at the same time holding governments to account. Reflecting on this year's theme for the Annual General Assembly, "Celebrating Successes and Giving Thanks", I am optimistic that the AFN will continue to advocate and work to deliver results for First Nations. It is always the right time to show gratitude and celebrate our successes when we come together twice a year at our Chiefs Assemblies. I look forward to highlighting our successes, and to giving thanks to our team and all the First Nations leaders who have played a role in getting First Nations to where we are today. We honour our ancestors and continue to fight for our current and future generations.

Regional Chief Kluane Adamek

Yukon

Dànnch'e!

On behalf of the AFN Yukon Region, I would like to welcome the Elders, Veterans, Chiefs, Leaders, Youth, and delegates attending the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) 40th Annual General Assembly here on the traditional territory of the Wolastoqiyik – Maliseet.

I want to begin by acknowledging those that we have lost this year and extend our deepest condolences to those families and friends who are grieving. We extend prayers to our communities and citizens who need it during these hard times.

A little over a year ago, I was honoured to have been acclaimed as Yukon Regional Chief and sworn-in for a three-year term. I am excited about our future. I am eager to explore new innovative opportunities and ongoing collaboration with my fellow AFN Executive colleagues that now include three female Regional Chiefs – the most in our shared AFN history. I am also pleased to join representatives from the Women's, Elders, and Youth Councils as we work together to continue to advance priorities of First Nations from coast to coast to coast.

I would also like to extend congratulations from the AFN Yukon Region to all students and graduates of 2019! In particular, I want to acknowledge the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Dákwänjē immersion program students who have been learning Southern Tutchone!

Reflections

In this era of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Calls to

Action; the recently-released National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Final Report and Calls to Justice; #MeToo; and 'climate-action', led by emerging female leaders like Anishinabek Nation Water Ambassador Autumn Peltier and Nacho Nyak Dun First Nation citizen Geri Lee Rose Buyck, who continue to advocate for the protection of the Peel Watershed; the future looks bright for the coming generations. There is no question that it is becoming important for our young people, particularly First Nations women, to assume leadership positions and restore our rightful place. We acknowledge the balance that is always needed in our communities and in our work. We thank and honour the male allies who continue to stand with us and support us.

I firmly believe leadership is built through mentorship, support, and building capacity in our people. I am so proud of the AFN Yukon Region team that is primarily made up of Yukon First Nations women. These women continue to be key drivers in re-energizing our communications, outreach, and social-media efforts to create more awareness amongst our non-Indigenous partners and allies.

Notably, we have opened an AFN Yukon Regional Chief's Office located in Whitehorse on the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council. It will serve as a gathering place for our leaders and a meeting place for welcoming other governments, community groups and organizations, and Yukon First Nations citizens.





Regional Key Activities and Accomplishments – “Through Unity, We Find Strength”

It is with pride that I would like to share some of my team’s achievements and experiences with you. Over the past year the AFN Yukon Region has continued to work directly with the 14 Yukon First Nations to advance their priorities, at their direction. This coming fall, the AFN Yukon Region will be hosting an Honouring Feast to acknowledge the tremendous leadership of former AFN Yukon Regional Chiefs. We are also planning a national dialogue inviting leaders from across the country to learn from our Yukon First Nations on their journey moving beyond the *Indian Act* and advancing nation re-building and self-determination through Modern Treaty and Self-Government Agreements. For more information please visit www.afnyukon.ca. We look forward to welcoming you to the Yukon this fall!

Additionally, a number of key resources, including our various discussion papers regarding proposed federal legislation, are available on our website at: <http://afnyukon.ca/resources>.

We are excited to announce the newly established AFN Yukon Region - Annual Awards, which will be presented at the upcoming Honouring Feast. These awards are to recognize, celebrate, honour, and acknowledge the incredible efforts made by Yukon First Nations citizens in the following areas:

- Emerging Leader Award
- Women in Leadership Award
- Climate Leader Award
- Language Warrior Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award

AFN Yukon continues to host Quarterly Chiefs’ Summits, regional dialogue sessions and roundtables, and continues to engage our Elders, Youth, and Women’s Council representatives in this important work. Some of the sessions that we have hosted in 2018/2019 include:

- September 2018, Quarterly Chiefs’ Summit & First Nation Market Housing Fund Engagement
- November 2018, Quarterly Chiefs’ Summit
- December 2019, AFN Special Chiefs Assembly, Yukon First Nation Caucus and meetings with Federal Ministers
- January 2019, AFN Yukon Health Roundtable
- February 2019, AFN Yukon Housing Roundtable
- February 2019, Quarterly Chiefs’ Summit
- March 2019, AFN Yukon Environment - Climate Change & Water Legislation Roundtable
- March 2019, Quarterly Chiefs’ Summit
- May 2019, Quarterly Chiefs’ Summit
- June 2019, Annual Chiefs’ Summit
- July 2019, AFN Yukon Water Legislation Roundtable

National Key Activities and Accomplishments

As part of the AFN Executive Committee, I am responsible for the following AFN national portfolios:

1. Modern Treaties (a newly created portfolio);
2. Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment (Chair); and
3. Chiefs Committee on Health (Co-Chair), Lead – Mental Wellness.

I am also a member of the AFN Management Committee and I provide my full support as

AFN Executive Lead for the National Youth Council.

Below you will find highlights from these national portfolios as well as other key events with influential leaders. All of this work contributes to supporting and advancing Modern Treaty and Inherent Rights in the Yukon, across the country, and internationally.

Modern Treaties Portfolio

With 11 First Nations in the Yukon with Self-Government agreements, we represent the largest Modern Treaty region. These Yukon First Nation Governments have moved 'beyond the Indian Act' and have a great deal to share regarding negotiating, implementing, and advancing self-determination.

The purpose of the Modern Treaties portfolio is to create space for those First Nations with modern treaties and self-government agreements, as well as those First Nations who are interested in pursuing self-determination through a modern treaty or self-government agreement, to discuss issues and coordinate advocacy efforts to move these processes forward.

At the Special Chiefs Assembly in Ottawa on December 4–5, 2018, the Chiefs-in-Assembly supported Resolution 77/2018, which directed the AFN to fully support the full implementation of the Yukon and British Columbia First Nations land claim and self-government agreements, and to seek resources to support the creation of an AFN Modern Treaty Implementation Group mandated to increase advocacy on Modern Treaty implementation. As the AFN Executive lead on this portfolio, I will

continue to pressure the federal government to honour their obligations to implement modern treaties and self-government agreements.

The following provides an update on two issues related to modern treaties and self-government agreements: i) loan forgiveness and ii) funding transfer agreement negotiations.

i. Loan Forgiveness

As the AFN Executive Committee Modern Treaty portfolio holder, it is part of my responsibility to ensure that the AFN continues to pressure the federal government to fully advance the commitments made in the 2019 Federal Budget as they relate to modern treaties. Under the Chapter "Advancing Reconciliation" in the 2019 Budget, the federal government proposed *"to invest \$1.4 billion over seven years to forgive all outstanding comprehensive claim negotiation loans and to reimburse governments that have already repaid the loans."*

This announcement is a positive step in recognizing the rights of modern treaty holders and it was met with positive responses from Yukon First Nation Chiefs and other modern treaty and self-government leaders. In our view, the forgiveness of loans and repayment of loan dollars is a positive step towards reconciliation.

However, there is a growing skepticism that the federal budget commitments will not be realized in light of the impending federal election. Yukon First Nation Chiefs are asking Canada: *"When can modern treaty holders and other self-government agreement holders*





expect to receive the first instalment (of a seven-year commitment) of the repayment dollars?”

As we move towards the federal election in October, it is critical that the AFN pressure the federal government and all federal political parties to develop a plan to implement loan forgiveness and repayment for modern treaty and other self-government agreement holders.

ii. Funding Transfer Agreement Negotiations with Canada

As First Nation Governments, we should have direct access to federal funding based on our Final Agreements (modern treaty and self-government agreements); similar and comparable to other levels of governments to respond to the needs of all of our citizens, inclusive of status and non-status. Recently in the Yukon, Teslin Tlingit Council (TTC) was victorious in their court battle against the Government of Canada on the issue of federal monies under a financial transfer agreement (FTA) for programs and services. The Government of Canada bases its funding decisions on the number of TTC citizens who are “status Indians.” TTC argued that its definition of citizenship under the final agreement is not based on status under the *Indian Act* and therefore calculations for the FTA need to be calculated on the entire number of citizens, including both status and non-status. The Yukon Supreme Court ruled that Canada has a legal obligation to negotiate a self-government financial transfer agreement with TTC based on the citizens of TTC, as defined by Chapter 3 of the TTC Final Agreement, inclusive of status and non-status.

Moreover, Canada needs to better invest in the process of “negotiations” itself, to instruct their negotiators to implement the terms of self-government agreements upholding the Honour of the Crown, and to accelerate the pace of discussions. Current FTA negotiations require more meaningful financial resources to better support and inform negotiations from a self-governing First Nation point of view.

Meaningful negotiations will require Canada to recognize that effective First Nation government operations will need comparable resources to be provided. This must include additional resources, considering the unique nature of programs, and a coordinated/comprehensive approach of delivery of programs. Momentum is on our side, but we need to push even harder now for full implementation of our agreements and rights.

Climate Action and Environment

i. Bill C-69

Earlier this spring, I had the opportunity to present to the Senate Standing Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources to discuss Bill C-69, *An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*. I presented that First Nations welcomed many of the proposed changes that Bill C-69 would make, including the mandatory consideration of Indigenous Knowledge, a necessary assessment of impacts on rights in decision-making; and regulatory opportunities for First Nations governments to lead impact assessments themselves.

I also presented that there remain gaps in the proposed legislation. Chiefs across the country have stood firm that the legislation must respect “*First Nations treaties, rights, title, and jurisdiction, and recognize their responsibilities to their traditional territories.*” I concluded that the provisions of Bill C-69, along with the minimum standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and existing Section 35 inherent and Treaty rights, provide an opportunity to move forward together towards a future where First Nations are equal partners in all major resource decisions.

ii. International Nature Summit, Montreal

In April 2019, AFN Yukon Climate Change Coordinator, Emily McDougall, and I attended the International Nature Summit, hosted by the Government of Canada. The Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, was also in attendance. I was invited to speak at the Summit as both Chair of the Advisory Committee on Environment and Climate Change (ACE) and as a northerner coming from a region that has deeply felt the impacts of climate change.

During the week, our AFN delegation was able to secure meetings with federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Catherine McKenna; former Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Paul Martin; and Actor-environmentalist, Harrison Ford. During these intimate discussions we shared experiences from Yukon First Nations. The discussion with former Prime Minister Martin was particularly profound as he expressed the importance of Indigenous leaders leading the way on the environment given the

natural relationship that we have with nature since time immemorial.

The event was also an opportunity to share experiences from the Yukon territory, including the Gwitchin’s continued advancement of the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the protection of the Porcupine Caribou. Chief of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, Chief Dana Tizya-Tramm, and the ACE Circle of Experts members, Norma Kassi and Lorraine Netro, continue to advance this critical issue nationally and internationally. The AFN Yukon Region also hosted a parliamentary reception in December 2018 to bring awareness to this important issue as part of the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly.

iii. Caribou Days and State of Emergency by Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation

As always, I was honoured to be invited to attend Caribou Days on May 18–20, 2019, in Old Crow, and to experience the wonderful hospitality of the Vuntut Gwitchin people. This is an annual event to celebrate the Porcupine Caribou herd, and their migration as they travel through Vuntut Gwitchin territory and through Alaska, the Yukon, and Northwest Territories. There are jigging competitions, traditional and non-traditional games, and educational demonstrations. It was a powerful few days that I and the AFN Yukon team felt privileged to be a part of.

This year’s festival was particularly important as the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, the most northern community in the Yukon, shared its *Declaration of a State of Emergency on Climate Change* with us.

Northern peoples, and particularly Yukon First Nations, are currently the first to feel





the impacts of climate change. I believe that Yukon First Nations can also be the first responders in taking action on this global crisis. This Declaration was made in respect of all living beings and for the future of all peoples. The Declaration's title comes from past Elder Sara Abel Chitze (born in 1896) who said, "Yeendoo Diinehdoo Ji'heezrit Nits'oo Ts'o' Nan He'aa", which means, "After our time, how will the world be?" The state of emergency was declared on May 19, 2019, with the goal of creating an Indigenous climate accord across the Arctic Circle and beyond.

At the May 2019 AFN Executive Committee meeting, I re-affirmed my strong support for the *Declaration of a State of Emergency on Climate Change* and put forward the following motion, which was unanimously supported by members of the AFN National Executive Committee:

That the Executive Committee support the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment (ACE) in calling a 'climate emergency', in support of the Vuntut Gwichin, who released their Yeendoo Diinehdoo Ji'heezrit Nits'oo Ts'o' Nan He'aa Declaration last week, and the important work of women, youth and Elders in advancing action on climate change.

iv. AFN Yukon Delegation Visit to Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska's 84th Annual Tribal Assembly

Earlier this spring, I had the pleasure to travel with AFN Yukon Elder Chuck Hume, our regional team, and Teslin Tlingit Council leaders to visit Juneau, Alaska and attend the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska's 84th Annual Tribal Assembly. Maintaining positive relationships

with the Tribal leadership in Alaska is important for many issues that Yukon First Nations need to advance.

At the top of the list of issues is joint stewardship of the environment, and finding ways to mitigate and reverse the impacts of climate change, and the negative impacts on the lands, rivers, fish, and wildlife that we collectively share across the border.

MMIWG Final Report and Calls to Justice

On June 3, 2019, the Commissioners of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) released their final report to federal, provincial, and territorial governments. My office issued a direct challenge to Canadians in response:

"On this very important day, we call on Canadians to stop, to reflect, and to take a very serious look at the systemic failures and lack of leadership demonstrated that has led to the preventable murders and abductions of our women and girls. These unnecessary lost lives are very real to us and the grieving continues. These women and girls were our daughters. Our nieces. Our sisters. Our granddaughters. They were our mothers and grandmothers. And the violence against our women is still happening today. In an era of #MeToo, this is quite simply unacceptable."

The Final Report leads with evidence that concludes that the cases of Indigenous women and girls murdered and whom have gone missing as investigated by the National Inquiry were victims of a 'Canadian Genocide'. It speaks directly to how terribly this country has systemically failed them and could not make a final determination of

the number of women and girls who have been murdered or gone missing due to the lack of timely action from Canada. It calls on Canadians to call out racism and violence against Indigenous Peoples, to learn the truth about Canadian history, and to read this report in full. As a First Nation female leader, it is critical to provide a perspective to the mainstream media narrative that mostly denied the findings of a Canadian Genocide.

My statement concluded: *“The results of the National Inquiry clearly show that the best way forward is for First Nations to reassert their inherent rights and our jurisdiction. This means taking back control of our own governance systems, such as restorative justice, our own healing mechanisms for impacted families and women affected by violence, the development of our own child and family services laws and systems, improved access to life-long education that is culturally relevant, increased access to Indigenous-led addictions and treatment programming, and the transfer of health care for delivery by First Nations.”*

Women Deliver 2019 Conference

I had the opportunity to attend the Women Deliver Conference in Vancouver in June. This event brought together over 8,000 women from around the world to speak about gender equality, health, rights, and well-being of girls and women. I was humbled by the speakers who spoke of hope, resilience, and action. The topics were diverse and global in perspective. It highlighted the challenges women face throughout the world, many of the same challenges that we face at home in the Yukon.

I was particularly proud to join and support emerging leaders at the Leaders and Ministerial Mentorship Forum, hosted by Maryam Monsef, Minister of International Development and Minister for Women and Gender Equality. This Forum brought together leaders and ministers from across the globe to discuss and generate solutions to address existing gaps in achieving gender equality. This forum provided the opportunity to share unique views on these issues from a First Nation’s perspective, and also to share how important it is to have international allies as we continue to call for justice for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

This was an inspiring conference that focused on actions and concrete solutions and I look forward to having discussions with Yukon First Nations on how we can support women leaders in our region.

Federal Election Strategy 2019

At the direction of Yukon First Nation Leadership (by resolution), the Council of Yukon First Nations, and AFN Yukon Region have been asked to develop a Federal Election Strategy to support a collaborative and proactive approach to inform and influence the 2019 Federal Election. The Federal Election Strategy sets an objective of encouraging First Nations civil participation in the federal election. It will serve as an opportunity to build a public awareness campaign, led by the Chiefs, with a goal of ‘getting out’ the First Nations vote in an exciting, positive, and non-partisan manner.

The strategy also hopes to make Yukon First Nations priorities ‘front and centre’ in the Canadian federal election campaign. Chiefs will be essential in leading





communication efforts with federal political parties and candidates. It is crucial that Yukon First Nations make a lasting impact on federal political parties, local candidates, and directly with their citizens to help inform them to participate in the political process.

Looking Forward

Looking towards the remainder of 2019 and into 2020, the AFN Yukon Region will continue to develop the capacity in our Regional Office and advocate for the rights of our 14 Yukon First Nations as they advance their priorities. We also look forward to our ongoing work with the Yukon First Nations and with First Nations, from coast-to-coast-to-coast, on important national issues, such as climate change and violence against Indigenous women and girls. I am excited for the year ahead. I wish you all a positive and productive Annual General Assembly in Fredericton, and a safe and enjoyable summer.

*Gunalchéesh, Shawniñhan, Mahsi Cho
Kluane Adamek, 'Aagé'
AFN Regional Chief*





Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya

Northwest Territories

The Dene Nation has been very busy over the past year.

An election for Dene National Chief in August 2018, saw the retirement of long-standing National Chief Bill Erasmus. He would be succeeded by one of three candidates for the position. Hundreds of delegates from across the Northwest Territories, and beyond, cast their ballots in Hay River at the 48th Annual Dene National Assembly. Of the 232 votes cast, Norman Yakeleya received 96, Eileen Marlowe received 75, and Richard Edjericon received 61. Bill Erasmus thanked the delegates and communities for their continued support after almost 30 years of service to the Dene Nation.

The Dene Nation has three departments conducting work on behalf of the Dene in the Northwest Territories: Wellness, Lands and Environment, and Information Services. Each department manager submitted an update, which is included in this report.

Dene Wellness Department

In July 2019, we will be staffing two new positions – a First Nations Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigator and a Jordan's Principle Coordinator. The First Nations Navigator position will be the liaison for First Nations communities and organizations requesting support and advocacy on Non-Insured Health Benefits issues. The Jordan's Principle Coordinator will work collaboratively with First Nations and external services to ensure First Nations children and families are funded for appropriate services.

The Nutrition North Program, an Indigenous Services Canada program designed to bring

healthy food to northern communities, is working on a new Harvesters Support Grant with communities in NWT that have the Nutrition North Program. Another year has been given for review of the food items to be subsidized.

The Department completed the regional review of the Medical Transportation Recommendations that were developed from literature, policy reviews, and feedback received from clients and providers through online surveys, written submissions, community visits, and regional roundtables for the Non-Insured Health Benefits Review Process.

The department is also moving forward with the NWT 1988 Health Transfer Agreement review. This Agreement requires legal, policy, and political analysis.

On February 11–12, 2019, the Dene Nation hosted a Regional Strategic Planning and Health Session to initiate dialogue with Elders, women, and youth. This was part of the AFN Health Sector's regional discussions focusing on "Health in the Era of Transformation". A report highlighting the top three regional priorities for the purpose of supporting regional health transformation, included feedback with respect to how the AFN Health Sector can support regions in their work, and how to better communicate with regional partners.

Lands and Environment Department

The year 2018–2019, was an exciting one for the Lands and Environment Department. They worked hard to close off files initiated by outgoing Dene National Chief Erasmus, and endeavour to move forward on new files





under the leadership of Dene National Chief Yakeleya.

Two of the big files under the leadership of former Dene National Chief Erasmus and Dene National Chief Yakeleya were the legislative reviews of Bill C-68 and Bill C-69. Each of these reviews saw the Dene Nation file a written submission to the appropriate Minister and a written submission to each Senate Standing Committee. Chief Yakeleya also made a live video submission to each Senate Standing Committee. All submissions were in support of the Bills. The Dene Nation will conduct additional reviews of the Bills in 2019-2020, under the leadership of National Chief Yakeleya, and will coordinate an Indigenous Knowledge conference at Dettah.

During the Dene Nation Leadership meeting in February 2019, the Lands and Environment Department hosted a climate change session which led to resolutions instructing the Dene Nation to: develop a Dene-based traditional knowledge policy; adopt a formal protocol and Dene code on Dene traditional knowledge; and host an Elders and Youth meeting on climate change, language, and culture.

Departmental staff also participated on the NWT Regional Contaminants Committee (NWTRCC), the territorial arm of the Northern Contaminants Program (NCP), and on the NCP Management Committee (NCPMC). The Dene Nation and the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) are Indigenous partners to the NCP as are the two Inuit organizations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) and Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC). Funding received by the Dene Nation (\$41,227) and CYFN (\$37,375) is significantly less than that allocated to ITK (\$163,300) and ICC (\$178,020). This remains

a serious concern for the Department. The Dene Nation funding is for preparation and attendance at meetings.

Departmental staff also participated on AFN Environment Sector committees and working groups with focus on Barren-ground Caribou protection, climate change, and Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). We also participated on two joint committees with government and First Nations. We are members of the Joint Action Committee on Climate Change (JCCA), which reports directly to the AFN National Chief and the Prime Minister. We also sit on the First Nations Advisory Committee on Species at Risk (FNACSAR), which reports to the AFN Executive and to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

Departmental staff also sit on the AFN National Fisheries Committee (NFC) and its technical working group, the National Inland Working Group.

Information Services Department

The Dene Nation attended an Indigenous Gathering of Museums in Saskatoon in April to network and meet with an archivist who could share ideas on how to begin organizing our collection.

The Dene Nation has a collection of archival material including audio and visual tapes from 1969. They need to be protected against further deterioration. As a result of attending the Gathering of Museums, we were able to find a way to get our audio and visual tapes digitized, without cost to us. Direction is needed from the Chiefs on what they want to do with the material we have stored—possible options are donating the

material to the local museum or attempting to set up our own resource centre.

On another front, the First Nations Labour and Employment and Development (FNLED) survey is underway across Canada, including in the NWT. This is a one-of-a-kind survey done by Indigenous people for Indigenous people. It is a project mandated by the Chiefs to gather quality data on the lifestyle of Indigenous people across Canada. Currently, that data is stored at the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) office in Ottawa but the plan is to eventually create a Dene Nation Information Governance Centre, a centre designed specifically for the Northwest Territories where our own information can be stored.

As a temporary technical support on the Chiefs Committee on Languages, department manager Snookie Catholique witnessed the first reading of Bill C-91, *An Act respecting Indigenous languages*, in the House of Commons in February 2019. We continue to lobby the Minister of Canadian Heritage for the Government of Canada to affirm language rights as an Inherent right and to ensure the promotion and preservation of Indigenous languages in Canada.

The Dene Nation held a successful luncheon with parties involved in the revival of Dene languages in the NWT. Plans are now underway to unite all Athapaskan Language speaking groups, this fall, in Calgary, AB to share commonalities, cultural ways, and to find ways to reconnect.

Communications Department

A review of communication activities of the Dene Nation revealed more work needs to be done to improve contact with the

communities and leadership. The Dene Nation took steps to ensure that community members are informed of the organizational activities by airing a weekly 15-20 minute broadcast on the local Indigenous radio station, CKLB-FM.

The Dene Nation also decided to support the region's only Indigenous-owned newspaper, *The Native Press*, by purchasing advertising and using that space to inform community members of recent activities affecting people living in Denedeh.

Other changes included issuing more press releases and embarking on new projects to enhance the profile of the organization.

The organization also took proactive positions on the following issues:

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG)

The Dene Nation attended several meetings in relation to the National Inquiry and offered continued support to those affected by the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in their community and/or family.

60's Scoop

The Dene Nation offers continued support and guidance to individuals impacted by the 60's Scoop. Forms for submission to the organization governing the data collection, Collectiva, are available at the Dene Nation office, and individuals are encouraged to submit their claim forms at the earliest opportunity.

Day School Settlement

The Dene National Chief attended hearings into the recently announced Day School Settlement in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He





offered the organization's support to any individual impacted by this settlement. Claim forms have been made available at the office, and the National Chief conducted a press conference to ensure community members throughout Denedeh were aware of the proactive position of the organization.

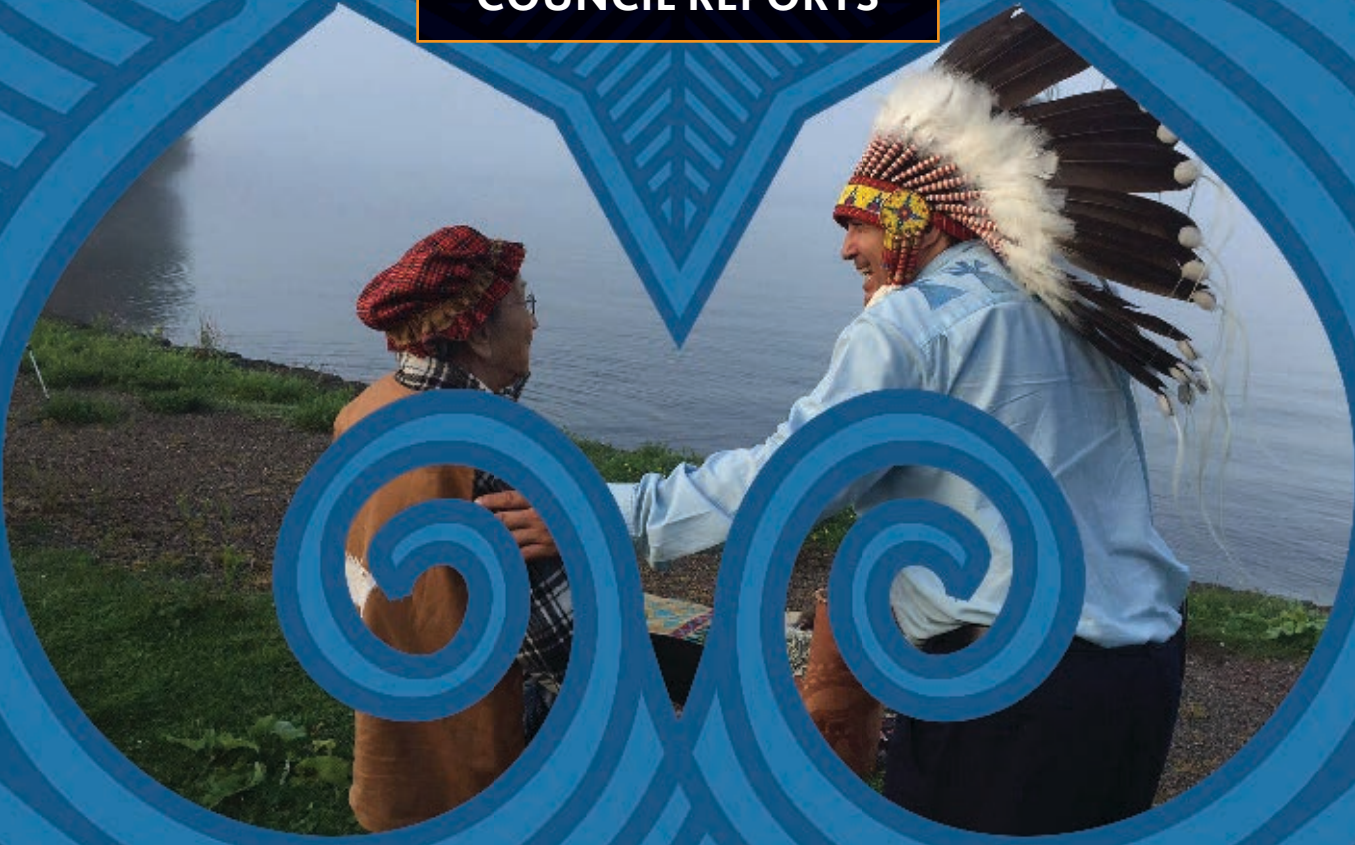
In all, it has been a very busy year for staff and leadership of the Dene Nation. We look forward to the many opportunities and challenges the next year may present.

*Norman Yakeleya
National Chief, Dene Nation
Regional Chief of the Assembly of First Nations*





COUNCIL REPORTS





AFN Council of Elders

Since the inception of the National Indian Brotherhood and transition to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), there has always been a place of honour and distinction for Elders, as is evident within the AFN Charter. The AFN Council of Elders (Council) provided both spiritual and political guidance in the formation of the organization, its structures, and its Charter. The Council helped to shape AFN policies, and the relationship with the federal government, and national and international organizations. Throughout its history, the AFN's leadership has relied upon the historical and cultural knowledge of the Council, especially in matters relating to Treaty rights and First Nations governance.

This role continues today. The Council includes representatives from each of the AFN's 10 regions. The Council continues to play an important role in all facets of the AFN and its operations.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The Council continues to meet bi-annually at AFN Annual General Assemblies and AFN Special Chiefs Assemblies to discuss issues and challenges facing the Council and to bring together new ideas.

Elders are the keepers of our traditions, values, languages, and history. They are guides to our leadership and future leaders. They speak with honour and pride. The Council will always encourage First Nations leaders and will continue to enlighten and inform on their experiences, issues, successes, and challenges. It is all of our responsibility to ensure the prosperity and

safety of the little ones, just as our ancestors did for us.

The Council has made efforts to engage with other Elders in their regions, to share information, and to communicate national messages to the grassroots. The Council participated in a three-day retreat in June 2019, with a focus on the development of a terms of reference. In regions across Canada, First Nations are revitalizing 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.

AFN Elders Council Guidelines and Protocols

The Elders Council continues to meet at Assemblies to discuss, review, and update the "Assembly of First Nations Elders and Elders Council Guidelines and Protocols". The Council plans to present the document to the Chiefs-in-Assembly for ratification in December 2019.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The AFN will continue to seek additional funding for the Council from federal and alternative sources. The additional funding is to ensure 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. AFN staff will continue to provide administrative support.



- The Council will continue to provide guidance to the AFN Executive Committee and staff.
- The Council will continue to provide guidance and vision to AFN Tri-Council meetings with the Women's and Youth Councils. The Council will continue their collaboration with the Tri-Council with a focus on finalizing and advancing their collective strategic plan.
- The Elders Council continues to move forward on efforts regarding the establishment of a traditional knowledge policy. The federal government has begun to recognize the value of traditional knowledge, and has incorporated traditional knowledge into pieces of legislation, notably on the environment. These policies will hopefully guide future governments in these areas.
- The Council continues to meet on Council protocol, roles, and responsibilities.





AFN Women's Council

The purpose of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Women's Council is to unify and create healthy, happy, and harmonious communities 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 communities 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, 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. For example in 2018, the Women's Council supported the following resolutions regarding forced sterilization of First Nations Women; Resolution 22/2018, *Redress for the Forced Sterilization of Indigenous Women* and Resolution 20/2018, *Support for the Criminalization of Forced Sterilization*.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The AFN Women's Council participated in the Federal, Provincial and Territorial meeting of the Ministers of Status of Women held on October 17, 2018, in Ottawa. This is the second time that the Ministers of Status of Women have invited the Women's Council to participate in this meeting and it provided an excellent opportunity for the Women's Council to discuss its priorities and explore building partnerships. The agenda for the meeting included discussions regarding National Indigenous Organizations' priorities, violence against Indigenous women and girls,

and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report.

The Women's Council also participated in the Third North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls meeting, held on October 2–3, 2018, in Mexico City, Mexico. The objective of the event was to move the discussion on eradicating violence against Indigenous women towards addressing not only the criminal justice and victimization aspects of violence, but also how to tackle crime prevention through empowerment, education, and outreach. As with previous years' discussions, the meeting focused on gender-based violence and analyzed other topics in order to promote the respect for and enjoyment of human rights, and the empowerment of Indigenous women and girls.

On March 11–16, 2019, a Women's Council representative attended the 63rd session of the Commission on Status of Women at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, NY. The Commission on the Status of Women was a unique opportunity for countries from around the world to come together and discuss how to address key gender equality issues, including how to uphold the human rights of women and girls. In addition to attending the General Assembly, a Women's Council representative participated in sessions, including prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and the role of modern technologies; improving educational outcomes for women and girls; and a panel discussion on violence against Indigenous Women and Girls – the importance of social protections systems to public services.





Furthermore, on April 23, 2019, during the 18th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), *Traditional Knowledge: generation, transmission and protection*, the AFN Women's Council provided advice regarding a side-event organized by the Trilateral Working Group. This side-event explored the role of midwives in guaranteeing maternal health for Indigenous women, particularly for women in rural Indigenous communities and their role in transmitting and protecting traditional practices. The event also touched on broader maternal health practices in the context of eradicating violence through connection to culture.

The AFN Women's Council engaged in meetings with Global Affairs Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNA) on the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, to advance the rights of Indigenous women and girls in fragile and conflict-affected states, and to draw on experiences from within Canada. The Women's Council was asked to participate and provide comments on how the Women, Peace, and Security Advisory Group can help advance the situation for Indigenous women and girls in conflict-affected states and contribute to implementing the Action Plan.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The AFN Women's Council will continue to advocate for the establishment of a gender-balanced perspective within First Nations communities, and within all entities dealing with First Nations, that honour the rights and aspirations of First Nations women. Looking ahead to 2019 and 2020, the Women's Council anticipates much of its work will be devoted to advocating for the

implementation of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report's Calls for Justice.

On June 3, 2019, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls released its Final Report. The Final Report explores the many intersectional issues which contribute to the problem of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The Final Report also contains 4 overarching findings relating to rights recognition, justice, security, and health and wellness. The report includes 231 Calls for Justice, which include recommendations to governments (including Indigenous governments), institutions, industries, service providers, partners, and to all Canadians. The findings contained in the Final Report, as well as the Calls for Justice, will be an important and significant area of advocacy for the Women's Council moving forward.





AFN National Youth Council

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Youth Council (NYC) operates as a 20-member council representing First Nations youth from each of the 10 AFN regions. Each region has one male and one female representative, but the council is inclusive to all genders and non-binary identities. This national body is a key component of the AFN, established in the Charter, and represents First Nations youth on issues that impact them on a daily basis. The NYC provides insight to the AFN secretariat, committees and working groups on various youth-related and non-youth-related issues.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Youth Hope Fund – Interim Steering Committee

Members of the AFN NYC are actively engaged in an Interim Steering Committee to establish the Youth Hope Fund. The First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) created the Youth Hope Fund to support First Nations youth-led projects dedicated to life promotion and suicide prevention. For the purposes of the Fund, life promotion and suicide prevention programs are those provided by First Nations health institutions, cultural centres, organizations, communities, and individuals/groups, whether, informal or formal, certified or noncertified. The role of the Interim Steering Committee is to identify themes, eligibility requirements, targets, parameters, determine a selection process, and select the successful applicants. Members of the Interim Steering Committee were based on recommendations from various First Nations youth organizations. The AFN NYC occupies three seats on the Interim Steering Committee and continues

to support this First Nation youth-led process.

Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope –Youth Calls to Action

Members of the AFN Youth Council attended and supported the Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope Youth Forum in February 2019. The Forum was supported and coordinated by the AFN Education Sector. The purpose of this forum was to provide a platform for First Nations youth from across the country to discuss amongst themselves, over three days, their issues and priorities in education. On the final day, youth had the opportunity to share their perspectives with AFN leadership, policy analysts, and decision-makers. The discussions resulted in the following calls to action.

“We are the Carriers of Hope, ages 13 – 18 years old and representing the 10 Assembly of First Nations Regions: please, hear our voices. When First Nations youth mental health and wellness are supported, we will achieve more. Our Calls to Action are here to address and support the mental, spiritual, physical and emotional well-being of all First Nations youth. These are our Calls:

1. We call upon all levels of government to increase funding for education to have male, female and Two-Spirit Elders have a significant role in schools; as counsellors or teaching traditional ways, which will support the mental, spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being of First Nations youth in every school in Canada.
2. We appreciate the significant investment in land and cultural programming announced by the Assembly of First Nations and the Government of Canada.



This commitment matters to First Nations youth because culture and being on the land keeps our traditions alive while connecting us to ourselves, families, Nations, and Ancestors. However, we call for the expansion of this current funding to all First Nations students to include the North and those living off reserve. This becomes another resource to support their well-being and success.

3. We call for increased funding for Early Childhood Development (ECD), increased daycare options, and lowering the age requirement for First Nations children to access ECD programs. This will ensure there will be a safe and secure space for our children and sustain young First Nations parents' education.
4. We call for equitably funded Kindergarten to grade 12 schools with a sufficient amount of resources, supports, and culturally-aware faculty for First Nations students in every Nation across the country.
5. We call on the Assembly of First Nations, Federal Government, and national organizations to encourage the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to influence and advocate for the inclusion of our shared history and First Nation knowledge into curricula."

Youth Summit on Environment and Climate Action

As a result of the ongoing commitment to engage in environmental advocacy, the AFN NYC hosted a National Youth Summit on Environment and Climate Action in April 2019. The Youth Summit focused on priority areas such as climate mitigation, land protection, environmental protection, sustainability, environmental health and

justice, and traditional ecological knowledge. The event promoted youth leadership and increased youth engagement in climate action; increased awareness and education around environmental issues; united youth throughout the country in learning, healing, and sharing; and provided tangible tools, resources, and knowledge that youth can bring back to their First Nations. The youth delegates developed six priority areas, the First Nations Youth Calls to Action on Environment and Climate Action, with actions that youth and leadership can take to address each one:

1. Decolonize and reconnect to the lands, waters, animals, medicines, and spirits.
2. Ensure lands, waters, non-human beings, medicines, and sacred sites are protected and accessible now and for the seven generations to come.
3. Stand alongside Youth in making sustainable green infrastructure and transportation accessible in First Nations.
4. Prioritize community well-being over profit, by Leadership, Youth, and businesses.
5. Practice sustainable consumption at the individual, community, leadership, and business levels.
6. Support Youth in developing awareness, education, and training for creating scalable, local, and land-based solutions.

AFN NYC Internal

The AFN NYC continues to hold their bi-annual meetings around the Special Chiefs Assembly and the Annual General Assembly (AGA). The six priority areas, First Nations Youth Calls to Action on Environment and Climate Action, will be presented at the 2019 AGA, as a part of the AFN NYC update. The





AFN NYC will have their yearly election at the AGA in July.

AFN NYC – AFN Secretariat

The AFN NYC continues to participate in AFN Chiefs Committees, working groups, and forums coordinated by the AFN Secretariat, as well as external functions.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Continue to collaborate with the AFN Elders and Women’s Councils (Tri-Council) with a focus on finalizing and advancing their collective strategic plan.
- Participate in the project review of the Indigenous Peoples Space at 100 Wellington St.
- Work to maintain a visible and substantial presence within the activities, meetings, and conferences of the AFN Secretariat and its various sub-committees and working groups.
- On July 21, 2019, the AFN NYC will have their next meeting at the AGA, where they will elect their new Executive members and Co-Chairs.
- The AFN NYC Co-Chairs will continue to participate in the Youth Hope Fund Interim Steering Committee.





CEO REPORT





Chief Executive Officer

She:kon, Greetings!

This year, the 40th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is being held at the Fredericton Convention Centre in Fredericton, New Brunswick with the theme of “Celebrating our Successes and Giving Thanks”. St. Mary’s First Nation is hosting the 40th AGA on the traditional Wolastoqiyik territory and has planned an exciting array of activities to celebrate First Nations culture through art, music, dance, and cuisine. I would like to offer many thanks to Regional Chief Roger Augustine and Chief Alan Polchies for working with such dedication to ensure your stay in Fredericton is filled with enjoyable and memorable cultural activities.

The 2018-2019 fiscal period has been another unprecedented year of activity. The AFN conducted approximately 12 national forums and conferences across the organization (land and resources, federal legislation, Jordan’s Principle, labour market, housing and infrastructure, education, water safety, income assistance); many of which will be described in the Sector Reports. Those planned and implemented by the Office of the Chief Executive Officer included the following.

- May 1 & 2, 2018 – Special Chiefs Assembly on Federal Legislation, Gatineau, QC
- July 24-26, 2018 – AGA, Vancouver, B.C.
- September 11 & 12, 2018 – Rights and Recognition National Forum, Gatineau, QC
- December 4-6, 2018 – Special Chiefs Assembly, Ottawa, ON
- January 14, 2019 – MOU Joint Priorities Meeting, Ottawa, ON

- January 18, 2019 – Community Round Dance & Feast, Ottawa, ON

All of the work undertaken by the AFN is mandated by resolutions passed by the Chiefs in Assembly. In 2018-2019, direct advocacy functions were given to AFN staff to focus on getting legislation through the parliamentary and senate systems before the end of June 2019 when the House concluded for the summer. One advocacy activity included an email campaign to the Senators whereby over 700,000 letters were received on-line which significantly impacted the progress of legislation. The National Chief and the Executive Committee worked together to ensure Parliamentarians and Senators were aware and in support of the legislation that was mandated by Chiefs in Assembly to become law. The bills that were successful in becoming law are listed below:

- Memorandum to Cabinet for Education – First Nations Post-Secondary Education Policy Proposal
- Bill C-48, *An Act respecting the regulation of vessels that transport crude oil or persistent oil to or from ports or marine installations located along British Columbia’s north coast*
- Bill C-55, *An Act to amend the Oceans Act*
- Bill C-68, *An Act to amend the Fisheries Act*
- Bill C-69, *An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*
- Bill C-88, *An Act to amend the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*
- Bill C-91, *An Act respecting Indigenous languages*
- Bill C-92, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*



- Bill C-97, *Budget Implementation Act, 2019, No. 1*

We are aware that not everyone agrees with the passing of these Bills; however, these provide a starting point for further discussion and refinement as we move forward with implementation.

In keeping with our AGA theme, there is much to be thankful for and to celebrate. It is a time to acknowledge these extraordinary achievements which First Nations have strived for, for so many years.

It has been an honour to serve the Chiefs and First Nations of Canada. With the strong and committed leadership provided by the National Chief, Executive Committee, and Chiefs in Assembly, I have no doubt that we are on the right path to succeed and, working with such knowledgeable and dedicated staff, the AFN will continue to make a difference.

Enjoy your time at the AGA! Visit the tradeshow and network with others! I hope to see you there!

Nia:wen

Paulette Tremblay, Ph.D., ICD.D., CAPA







SECTOR REPORTS





Communications Sector

The AFN Communications Sector is mandated to ensure that all First Nations receive timely and relevant information on the AFN and international, national, provincial, regional and local issues, priorities, policies and decisions that can impact First Nations. The Sector is responsible for a number of organizational communications functions, including strategic communications planning, media and public relations, social media, public awareness, and producing and coordinating publications, videos and translation. The Sector provides communications support to all policy areas within the AFN and assists the National Chief's Office.

The Communications Sector distributes information in a wide variety of formats and delivery services including print, broadcast fax, video and audio messages, e-mail blasts, web-based content, Indigenous and non-Indigenous media and social media. The AFN also works with the IT Sector to ensure materials are provided to the AFN website and webmaster.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Media and Public Relations

The Communications Sector advises, prepares, and implements strategic communications policy and planning for the AFN as a whole based on direction and mandates from First Nations, and strategies to advance specific initiatives, issues, gatherings and activities. The Sector works to develop materials and provide information to First Nations, governments, the media, and general public about the AFN, its activities and positions, and the National Chief's agenda and priorities.

Press releases, media advisories and statements are prepared and distributed nationally (in English and French) to Indigenous and non-Indigenous media, with regional distribution as applicable, and international media where relevant. More than 60 press releases, statements, and media advisories were prepared and distributed during the 2018-19 fiscal year. Communications also prepares media lines and talking points, backgrounders, op-eds, letters to the editor, and editorials on current and priority issues.

The Sector assists in preparing speaking notes for the National Chief and AFN spokespersons for a variety of events for wide-ranging audiences, including First Nation governments, groups and organizations, professional associations, national and international organizations, and federal and provincial governments.

Communications seeks to raise and maintain the profile of First Nation peoples and priorities through a variety of media, including print, broadcast, social media and web-based media. The Communications Sector is active in media outreach and media relations and has set up background briefings, interviews and editorial boards to further understanding and awareness of the AFN's activities and First Nations issues.

The Communications Sector oversees daily media monitoring to track, assess, and evaluate coverage of First Nations and Indigenous issues. Over the past year, there have been numerous developments that have resulted in widespread national and international media coverage for the AFN, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, First Nations child health and welfare (including





Jordan's Principle), Indigenous languages, the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and many developments regarding education, health, housing and infrastructure, and resource development, among many others.

Public Awareness

The Communications Sector works to raise awareness and understanding of First Nations issues, and the AFN's role, responsibilities, and activities. The AFN recognizes that First Nations have different communications needs and different ways of accessing information. For this reason, the AFN uses a mix of traditional and new media to disseminate information as widely as possible, including broadcast fax, e-mail and e-mail blasts, the AFN website, and social media.

The AFN issues regular updates on the National Chief's and the AFN's activities and work underway at the national office. Communiqués are distributed by fax and e-mail to all First Nations, provincial/territorial organizations (PTOs) and tribal councils, and distributed via social media and web posting.

Public information is also distributed to more than 1,750 subscribers through the AFN e-mail subscription service (listserv). Users can sign up on the AFN website.

While the IT Sector oversees website management, Communications provides support for the AFN website (www.afn.ca) through regular updates to provide current information on AFN activities and priorities.

The AFN continues to expand its social media outreach with more than 51,000 followers on Facebook (**Assembly of First Nations/Assemblée des Premières Nations**) and 47,800 on Twitter (**@AFN_Updates**). The increased use of shareable social media graphics accompanying AFN posts has helped to double the number of views. The AFN is expanding its use of **LinkedIn** and has seen an increase in followers from 1,569 to more than 7,000, since July 2018. The AFN also initiates and implements campaigns for events like Indigenous History Month.

The #IndigenousHistoryMonth social media campaign, highlighting important events and notable individuals in the Indigenous community, throughout the month of June, was successful and well received. Videos are also posted on social media, including the Assembly of First Nations **YouTube** channel, which has more than 740 subscribers. The National Chief has his own Facebook page and Twitter account that are managed separately from the AFN accounts, and are administered by the National Chief's Office.

The AFN continues to provide live webcasting by in-house personnel for all Assemblies and key gatherings, some of which are interactive and accessible to the online audience. The AFN uses Facebook Live for some live coverage of events like press conferences.

The Communications Sector also offers editing, desktop publishing, and production coordination for the AFN Secretariat, as well as video production of messages for the AFN website, YouTube, and external events.





Communications Strategies

The Communications Sector develops and implements global AFN communications strategies as well as targeted strategies and communications plans for specific events, issues and initiatives. The Sector provides advice, recommendations and communications support to the AFN Secretariat, inclusive of all policy areas, and to the National Chief's Office. Communications advice and recommendations are also provided to First Nations upon request whenever possible.

As of 2018, AFN Communications is engaging in research projects on First Nations/Indigenous public opinion to inform communications work.

- Finalize development and launch an AFN App to provide updates from AFN directly to users' mobile devices.
- Enhanced monitoring of print, broadcast and social media using new analytics tools.
- Public opinion polling initiatives to inform strategic communications activities.
- Ongoing editing and desktop publishing of AFN publications.
- Ongoing French translation of public materials.
- Assistance in providing updates to the AFN website.
- Increased use of in-house webcasting and video production ability.

Translation

The Communications Sector coordinates all French/English translation requirements to ensure that the general public and First Nations are able to access all public materials produced by the AFN in both French and English. As per AFN policy, all public documents (including those posted on the AFN website) are available in French and English. Translation in other languages is coordinated as required. Translation projects during the 2018-19 fiscal year totaled 1,030,053 words.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Ongoing media and public relations efforts and initiatives.
- Publication of Bulletins and other public information materials.
- Increased and enhanced use of new media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and mobile applications.





Economic Sector

The Economic Sector focuses on policy topics that promote economic development, trade, resource development, labour force and human resources development, procurement, agriculture, sustainability, connectivity, and other economic policy matters. This Sector also coordinates policy activity regarding First Nations persons with disabilities and social innovation. These areas of work are based on national resolutions as passed by the AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly.

The Chiefs Committee on Economic Development (CCED) and the Chiefs Committee on Human Resources Development (CCHRD) provide recommendations to the AFN on each of these portfolios and national resolutions.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Trade Relations

The inherent right to trade and trade relations continues to be a priority for First Nations. The AFN's work on trade relations supports implementation of Chiefs-in-Assembly resolutions on economic and trade development. These resolutions, including Resolution 36/2017, *First Nations Trade Relations*; Resolution 104/2017, *Establishing a First Nations Advisory Committee under Section 6 of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act*; and Resolution 38/2018, *Realizing Benefits for First Nations in the Implementation of International Trade and Investment Agreements*, affirm First Nations' inherent right to trade and mandate efforts to advocate for First Nations economic growth, the development of options to secure greater economic independence, and support working with Canada to include a Trade and Indigenous Peoples chapter in all trade

agreements. In the work on trade, the emphasis is on respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples.

Strategic considerations on First Nations trade relations must be based on the inherent right to trade within and between Nations. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Article 20 (1) affirms that "Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems or institutions to be secure in their enjoyment of their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities" as guaranteed under Section 35 (1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

National Chief Perry Bellegarde's participation on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Council provided an important opportunity to advocate for First Nations rights and interests and to ensure a First Nations voice in this process. As part of the NAFTA Council, National Chief Bellegarde pressed for the inclusion of an Indigenous Peoples chapter in the new NAFTA, and advocated for engagement with First Nations that aligns with the rights of First Nations under the Canadian *Constitution* and international laws.

The new NAFTA, called the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) was signed on November 30, 2018. The CUSMA did not include an Indigenous Peoples chapter. However, the National Chief was successful in advocating for the addition of provisions to respect First Nations rights and provide preferences for First Nations' businesses. The agreement recognizes the important roles played by First Nations and other Indigenous peoples in the long-term





conservation of the environment and puts emphasis on the importance of cooperation activities to promote and enhance opportunities for First Nations businesses and services. The general exception clause for Indigenous Peoples Rights helps ensure the protection of inherent, Aboriginal and Treaty rights, which provides a foundation for greater economic stability, certainty and integrity to international trade and prosperity to North America. The provisions addressing Indigenous peoples in the CUSMA make it the most inclusive international trade agreement for Indigenous peoples to date.

All parties are now undertaking their domestic processes for implementation of the CUSMA, which for Canada is ratification and implementation by legislation. The Bill C-100, an *Act to Implement the Agreement between Canada, the United States of America and the United Mexican States*, was introduced in parliament on May 29, 2019. The AFN has pressed for Bill C-100 to include a non-derogation clause to help ensure that the proposed Bill to implement CUSMA and the CUSMA itself, are interpreted and implemented consistently with Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Building on the work of a draft Indigenous Peoples chapter, Canada introduced the concept of a Trade and Indigenous Peoples chapter at the Pacific Alliance Free Trade Agreement negotiations. The Pacific Alliance Free Trade Agreement is being negotiated with Colombia, Chile, Peru, Mexico, and associated members: Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. Canada is currently negotiating a comprehensive Canada-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement and proposed the inclusion of an Indigenous Peoples chapter. Mercosur is a South

American trading block composed of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

On December 7, 2018, the National Chief and members of the AFN Executive attended the First Ministers' Meeting focused on trade and the economy in Montreal, QC. The meeting, called by the Prime Minister, included all provincial and territorial leaders. The AFN stated clearly that attempts to disregard the UN Declaration and the lack of recognition of free, prior, and informed consent are barriers to trade. Decision-making processes for natural resource development projects must involve First Nations from the outset and include opportunities for procurement, employment for First Nations, and revenue sharing. Recommendations made to the Premiers to improve opportunities for First Nations, included recruiting First Nations as part of advisory councils, corporate boards, and decision-making bodies; sharing in revenue opportunities; ownership; consideration of legislation that would require a percentage of procurement be set aside for First Nations businesses and service providers; and improving access to equity.

Procurement Opportunities and Benefits

First Nations businesses continue to actively contribute to Canada's economy and are poised to be major contributors in the procurement space. According to a Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat report in 2011, First Nations and Indigenous businesses contributed approximately \$974 million in revenue. It is expected that this number will increase over the years as First Nations and Indigenous businesses continue to grow. However, First Nations and Indigenous businesses have more barriers than non-





Indigenous businesses when it comes to fair access to procurement opportunities.

The Chiefs-in-Assembly directed the AFN to advocate for First Nations economic growth and the development of options to secure greater economic independence. The Chiefs-in-Assembly have also specifically acknowledged the importance of stronger and targeted procurement strategies that result in contracts to First Nations businesses across Canada through resolutions, including Resolution 93/2018, *3 Federal Government Procurement Programs for First Nations*, and Resolution 30/2008, *Support for the Public Sector Aboriginal Business Association – PSABA*, and have called on the AFN, the CCED and Canada to continue to prioritize First Nations involvement and access to procurement opportunities. The most recent, AFN Resolution 93/2018, *Federal Government Procurement Programs for First Nations*, includes direction from the Chiefs-In-Assembly, to create benchmarks, track transparency and accountability, and ensure results and progress in the development of First Nations procurement programming and initiatives.

As of 2018, targeted Indigenous procurements represented less than 1% of all federal procurements. The Government of Canada, through Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), is currently reviewing the federal approach to Indigenous participation in procurement, including the modernization of the Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business (PSAB). Improved access to federal, provincial/territorial, and private sector procurement, new trade opportunities, and support for First Nations businesses stands for a significant growth opportunity for First

Nations businesses. With the guidance and advice from the CCED and technical representatives, the AFN will continue to advocate for increased procurement opportunities and First Nations economic benefits.

Energy Development and Natural Resources

The opportunities and regulations that accompany the development and transmission of energy resources are of great interest to First Nations. Natural resource development and the transition to a clean energy economy are critical components of Canada's economic prosperity. Many First Nations are interested in and/or are presently leveraging the benefits of resource development and clean energy.

AFN Resolution 55/2017, *First Nations Energy Strategy*, calls for the development of a First Nations Energy Strategy and calls on the Prime Minister and provincial and territorial Premiers to fully engage and meaningfully include First Nations in regional, national, and international energy strategies and planning processes. This can only be done through the development of concrete mechanisms to ensure full and effective First Nations participation in the implementation of these processes.

The AFN has prepared a draft paper for the CCED's consideration on strategic direction and activities needed to plan for and involve First Nations in all aspects of work on energy, forestry, and natural resources. The CCED had previously supported continued dialogue on First Nations perspectives and priorities on energy development. There are a number of aspects that must be considered regarding First Nations' role in a low carbon





economy, including a long-term perspective and emphasis on the need to respect Aboriginal and treaty rights, information sharing, the necessity of enhanced capacity support for First Nations when considering energy projects in Canada, and the creation of a First Nations Energy Strategy. The federal department of Natural Resources Canada has funded some of this work.

First Nations, as rights holders, as owners, and as a burgeoning economic and labour force are poised to shape and grow participation levels in the natural resources resource sector. However, respecting First Nations inherent rights and title and Treaty rights is essential for inclusive economic strategies and increased economic certainty.

In 2018, AFN Regional Chief Kluane Adamak participated in the Energy and Mines Ministers Conference (EMMC) on behalf of the AFN. During this event, the Regional Chief and other Indigenous delegates had an opportunity to speak with the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) ministers and promote First Nations natural resource priorities; trade; environmental assessment and regulatory development; regional planning; participation on boards and councils; and the opportunities and barriers to women in energy and mining sectors.

The Canadian Mines and Minerals Plan (CMMP) was released in March 2019. The FPT ministers called for a plan in August 2017. It is expected that the focus will now be on the development of actions plans to implement the CMMP. The AFN has not participated in the development of the CMMP, but has continued to monitor the progress of this FPT initiative.

On March 29, 2019, the AFN coordinated a meeting of First Nations technical representatives for discussion on energy development, natural resources, procurement and economic growth to inform the development of AFN economic policy approaches and recommendations.

With the guidance and advice from the CCED, and technical advice of First Nations economic organizations, the AFN has developed a draft research paper that outlines some of the key developments, perspectives, and priorities as insight into the various issues that stand at the heart of First Nations' engagement with the natural resource economy. The draft options paper is for consideration of the CCED. Proposed activity includes further research and engagements in line with national resolutions and in support of First Nations development objectives.

Agriculture

In July 2016, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed AFN Resolution 47/2016, *First Nations to Access Economic Opportunities Through a First Nations Agricultural Strategy*. This resolution mandated the AFN to engage with the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). AAFC recognized the importance of facilitating a First Nations agricultural discussion, including creating greater First Nations participation within all aspects of the agriculture and agri-foods sector. As directed by resolution, the AFN is examining methods for engaging with First Nations leadership and AAFC to collaborate on furthering this strategy concept and to try to identify a path forward.

During the 2018 Special Chiefs Assembly, Resolution 63/2018, *Eco-Agricultural*





Strategy, was passed, further mandating the AFN to continue to call on FPT jurisdictions and municipalities to remediate First Nations agriculture lands. The AFN is working with the AAFC in bringing together Environment and Climate Change Canada to discuss ways in supporting First Nations in a coordinated approach for the collection of baseline data on soil biodiversity and soil remediation.

In 2018, AAFC implemented new Canadian Agriculture Partnerships, which are five-year FPT initiatives to strengthen the agriculture, agri-food, agri-based products sector and increase its competitiveness, prosperity, and sustainability.

Activity has continued on a First Nations environmental scan, staying apprised of information on agriculture programs and services available for First Nations, and working with AAFC in coordinating agriculture sector informational meetings with First Nations throughout 2018.

Human Resources Development

The CCHRD, as mandated by Chiefs-in-Assembly through AFN Resolution 32/2017, *Distinct First Nations Labour Market Strategy*, continues to provide leadership and direction toward the further development of a First Nations Labour Market Strategy (FNLMS) as part of the Employment and Social Development (ESDC) Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program initiated on April 1, 2019. The CCHRD has influenced positive changes per this resolution – including additional resources, a 10-year labour market strategy, and First Nations working with ESDC on changes in the delivery network. The CCHRD will be focused on more work related to this national resolution over the coming months.

In follow-up to Chiefs-in-Assembly direction, the policy approach for a new FNLMS, developed and put forward to the Government of Canada by the CCHRD and the First Nations Technical Working Group on Human Resources Development (TWG), focused on the need for long-term fiscal transfer agreements to replace the year-to-year contribution agreements, funding indexed based on inflation, and First Nations population increases to ensure stability and allow for capacity development to achieve measured outcomes.

The CCHRD has met twice with the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour to express that First Nations have directed that a new approach for human capital development be centered on a government-to-government relationship that recognizes First Nations jurisdiction and authority to govern and provide services to their citizens, wherever they reside. The CCHRD communicated to the Minister that Budget 2018 is a good starting point on the investments that are needed; however, that budget did not take into consideration inflation and population increases. It also fell short of identifying funds, separate from program funding, to support the development of a First Nations Labour Market Council and capacity as recommended by First Nations. At these meetings Minister Hajdu acknowledged and agreed to the direction expressed by the CCHRD, and to continue to work toward a transition that will achieve success. The AFN will need to consider advocacy in Federal Budgets going forward.

In compliance with direction provided by AFN Resolution 32/2017, *First Nations Trade Relations*, the AFN Economic Sector has





organized several technical meetings of the TWG comprised of First Nations Labour Market Agreement holders as well as two national meetings of the TWG and interested First Nations representatives to coordinate advice on the implementation of the First Nation Labour Market stream within the new ISET Program.

Recently, Canada has begun to modernize the federal labour standards in Part III of the *Canada Labour Code*. The AFN is monitoring this initiative and undertaking a preliminary analysis of the *Labour Code* changes and seeking information on how they may impact First Nations, including First Nation workers and business owners.

Disabilities

The CCHRD provides ongoing guidance and support on accessibility (disability) related work. Resolution 10/2018, *Resources for Engagement on Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation*; and Resolution 98/2017, *Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation*, and Resolution 55/2016, *First Nations Federal Accessibility Legislation*, mandate the AFN to work with ESDC to develop culturally-sensitive and distinct First Nations approaches to accessibility to support the unique needs of First Nations persons with disabilities (FNPWD) and First Nations governments.

With the guidance of these national resolutions, the AFN has gathered – and continues to gather – views on accessibility and disability related issues. The AFN achieved in February 22, 2019, a national interactive and accessible live-webcast webinar entitled *Empowerment of First Nations Persons with Disabilities and First Nations Governments on Distinct First Nations*

Accessibility Legislation. The national webinar has received over 419 viewers to-date and invited input and participation of FNPWD, First Nations governments, leadership, citizens, service providers, program deliverers, care givers, educators, and academics among others. The AFN continues to share on its website, background information including a legal background document, an AFN discussion guide, a literature review and environmental scan, surveys, summaries and reports.

The Government of Canada led an engagement with Canadians in 2016-2018, to receive input on accessibility and disability in the development of Bill C-81, the *Accessible Canada Act*. The Act was passed in the House of Commons on May 29, 2019, and attained royal assent on June 21, 2019. The AFN submitted a written submission on Bill C-81 to the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology on April 30, 2019, to raise concerns with this Bill, to identify vital resources for regional capacity building, and to advocate for timely resources for FNPWD and First Nations governments.

The AFN has started early work in bridging a broad sector of federal departments to discuss a continuum of (disability) care framework linking Indigenous Services Canada, Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and ESDC, among others. AFN Resolution 55/2018, *First Nations Disability Program on Reserves*, called on Canada to determine the needs for on-reserve disabilities' programming.

The AFN has been instrumental in amplifying the disability dialogue at several policy forums held across the country. The AFN's accessibility work has helped to bring





attention to decades of inequities faced by FNPWD and First Nations governments in accessing equitable programs and services on disability matters including centering the disability dialogue on human rights. In April 2019, the AFN submitted key interventions to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNSR) to leverage the AFN's important advocacy work on these key issues. The AFN has also identified important linkages to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda 2030, specifically the core objective to "leave no one behind". The SDGs are a set of 17 goals to address decent work, economic growth, poverty, good health, and more. The SDGs are a key instrument to work in alignment with the federal government to better track and measure the unacceptable socio-economic gaps experienced by FNPWD and First Nations governments.

Social Innovation and Social Finance

The AFN has newly initiated work on social finance. Social innovation-social finance is focused on developing new solutions to socio-economic challenges. The aim is to improve the quality of life of First Nations citizens, governments, and economies in collaboration with partners by testing creative ideas and methods to measure their impacts.

AFN Resolution 16/2015, *Support for Social Innovation/ Financing to enhance Funding for First Nations Socio-Economic Development*, called for enhanced collaboration and partnerships to address the needs of First Nations citizens. AFN Resolution 92/2018, *Social Innovation-Social Finance Framework - Leaving No One Behind*, directed the AFN to develop and seek resources from ESDC to

fund a framework/policy paper on social innovation, social finance to help identify First Nations finance gaps and priorities. Funding was recently made available to undertake this work.

In November 2018, the federal Fall Economic Statement announced the elements of a Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy. Canada committed up to \$755 million over 10 years, starting in 2020-2021, and \$50 million over 2 years in an Investment and Readiness Stream via grants and contributions. Minister Jean Yves-Duclos, Families, Children and Social Development, and Minister Patricia Hajdu, Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, are jointly mandated to develop a Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy for Canada.

In December 2018, the Chiefs-in-Assembly called on the ESDC to work with the AFN to identify investments and carve out specific resources from the Investment Readiness Stream specific to First Nations. The AFN has secured funding from ESDC and is carrying out project activities on: the development of a literature review, an environmental scan, a cost benefits analysis, a legal review, coordination of a national roundtable on September 5, 2019, and opportunities to engage in varying policy tables to inform a social finance policy framework.

The CCHRD provides guidance and direction for this work. The AFN will also seek recommendations on this emergent area from the CCED given the close policy relationship. As with work on disabilities, the AFN has researched linkages to the United Nations SDGs and Agenda 2030, which speak to the need for decent work, economic growth, poverty, affordable and clean





energy, good health, and more. The SDGs objective to “leave no one behind” helped to inform AFN’s work on social innovation/ social finance.

First Nations Connectivity and e-Strategy

Support and advocacy is needed for First Nations connectivity and information communications technology (ICT). AFN Resolutions 16/2008, *E-Community for First Nations – A National Framework*, and 53/2011, *First Nations e-Community Strategy*, provide direction to advocate for appropriate programs, services, and investments in First Nations ICT.

On July 2018, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 32/2018, *Strengthening On-Reserve Connectivity*. The resolution calls on the AFN to identify current gaps and obstacles for First Nations in participating and reaping the benefits from the ICT sector. It also calls on Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada to develop a comprehensive rural broadband strategy in collaboration with First Nations.

In October 2018, the AFN attended the 2018 Indigenous Connectivity Summit hosted by the Internet Society. The event included discussion on a variety of topics, including meeting the needs of First Nations and other Indigenous people to access fast, affordable and sustainable internet services; merits of connectivity as a tool for areas such as language and cultural revitalization; and the need for advocacy, capacity building, and more. Telesat Canada has also briefed the AFN on some of its work toward solutions for reliable, high-speed internet. The AFN’s past work on a First Nations e-strategy helped to promote connectivity, infrastructure, operations and management,

and capacity needs. Currently, this portfolio area and its activity remain unfunded at the AFN.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

Economic Sector:

- Work with Chiefs Committees to advance First Nations priorities for new investments towards economic programs and services that increase participation in all sectors of the economy and reduce poverty.
- Continue to promote the need to address data and information gaps within the economic portfolio, as well as work with federal counterparts to advance policy measures, including the following:

Trade Relations:

- Continue to advocate for engagement of First Nations in free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations and towards inclusion of Indigenous chapters in future FTAs.
- Continue to advocate for the inclusion of a non-derogation clause to help ensure that Bill C-100, which will to implement the CUSMA and the CUSMA itself, is interpreted and implemented consistently with Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.
- Advance First Nations priorities on trade, and pending confirmation of funding, put in place a workplan for a comprehensive trade strategy with input of First Nations. As well as collaborate with other Indigenous peoples on inter-nation trade/investment options.

Energy and Natural Resources Development:

- Pending confirmation of funding, continue the dialogue among First



Nations on new investments for First Nations energy project funding, programs to better support First Nations priorities, and participation in the Natural Resources economy.

Procurement:

- Continue advocacy for improved access to procurement opportunities for First Nations businesses. Pending confirmations, including required funding, seek input of First Nations leaders and technical experts on new investments, capacity requirements and legislation for a renewed federal strategy.

Agriculture:

- Continue to advocate for fairer cost sharing initiatives under the Canadian Agriculture Partnerships programs and services aimed at enhancing First Nations participation in the agriculture agri-foods sector. Work with AAFC in securing multi-year funding for the development of a First Nations agriculture strategy.

Human Resources Development:

- Work jointly with ESDC on the implementation of the First Nation Labour Market stream within the ISET Program.
- Undertake research on First Nations population increases and the effects of inflation on First Nations labour market funding. Continue to advocate for and review the planning, concept, and role of a First Nations Labour Market Council and Secretariat.
- Seek broader inclusion of, and share information with, First Nations on the changes to the Canada Labour Code.

Disabilities:

- Continue to seek resources to support First Nations governments to build inclusive and accessible facilities, programs, and services to meaningfully serve the needs of FNPWD.
- Meet with ESDC to discuss engagement with First Nations on building distinct First Nations accessibility approaches along with gathering First Nations views on Bill C-81.
- Monitor the findings of the UNSR's report to Canada by September 2019, aimed at federal, provincial and territorial governments meeting their obligations under the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Social Innovation and Social Finance:

- Share information with First Nations on the ESDC's launch of the new Investment Readiness Program for Social Innovation and Social Finance and the delivery partners that will facilitate the distribution of the program.
- Continue ongoing advocacy efforts, including the development of policy papers, recommendations, and a framework to help to inform First Nations governments and others, as mandated.

First Nations e-strategy:

- Continue advocacy and consider policy options that will support efforts in closing the connectivity gap between First Nations and Canada and identify ways for First Nations to participate and benefit from the ICT sector. Explore possible avenues to secure funding.





Education Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) and the National Indian Education Council (NIEC) are guided by Resolution 16/2016, *Honourable Process to Develop Recommendations to Support First Nations Education Reform*, which calls for full and meaningful regional First Nations participation on First Nations education reform, requires any draft federal legislation on First Nations education to be ratified by Chiefs-in-Assembly, and demands that Canada honours and upholds its constitutional obligation for Inherent and Treaty rights to education.

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. 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. First Nations students require special measures in order to enjoy their right to education on an equal footing with non-Indigenous students. This includes the right to equitable funding that meets their specific needs and circumstances, taking into account First Nations children's cultural, linguistic, and geographical needs, as well as historical realities.

Transforming First Nations K-12 Education

The Federal Budget 2016 allocated \$2.6 billion over five years for improving primary and secondary education for First Nations children, and \$129.4 million over two years for supporting early learning and child care. On December 5, 2017, the Chiefs-in-

Assembly resolved to support AFN Resolution 65/2017, *New Interim Funding Approach for First Nation Education*. This has resulted in the co-development of a policy proposal for a new funding approach to First Nations on-reserve education to support students, schools, and communities.

In January 2018, regional First Nations representatives and the AFN have entered into a co-development process on a First Nations policy proposal to inform the federal Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) and ensure First Nations Control of First Nations Education. Objectives of the policy proposal option on First Nations education funding were to unlock the existing "Transforming First Nation Education" funding commitments from Budget 2016 (currently limited to school board funding) and implement the actions below:

- Replace Indigenous Services Canada's (ISC) outdated, inefficient and inadequate proposal-based education programs with regional education approaches and funding models that provide sufficient, predictable, and sustainable funding.
- Support First Nations Regions to develop their own education funding model, which uses the education funding model of that province as a base calculation, plus adaptations and additions that provide funding for the unique needs of First Nations students, communities, and schools.

On February 28, 2018, the MC was passed by the federal Cabinet on Diversity and Inclusion. Immediately thereafter, the Drafting Team co-developed a Foundational Paper and K-12 Terms and Conditions to inform the required Treasury Board Submission. In October 2018, the Treasury





Board Submission was signed and approved, and implementation of the decision commenced in April 2019.

With K-12 Education Transformation, First Nations now have the opportunity to develop Regional Education Agreements (REAs), which are new education funding agreements that can be negotiated locally, regionally, and/or by Treaty territory. REAs use the provincial education funding model as a base for calculation, plus adaptations that provide funding for the unique needs of First Nations students, communities, and schools. At the same time, First Nations across the country are currently engaging in regional technical table meetings to further examine their regional interim formulas, which will fund First Nation education for those not in an REA, block, or self-government agreement.

Beginning in April 1, 2019, the series of new interim regional funding models for elementary and secondary education will be implemented and replace the federal proposal-based programs.

The new transformed funding approach is aimed at ensuring that students attending First Nations schools are supported by predictable base funding that is directly comparable to what students enrolled in provincial education systems receive. On top of this base funding, ISC will be providing expanded supports for full-time kindergarten, and increased language and culture programming at on-reserve schools.

K-12 Transformation eliminated most proposal-based funding, however, the following will remain available:

- Research and Learning & Innovations in Education Program;

- A component of the High Cost Special Education Program;
- The Education Partnerships Program.

In December 2018, the CCOE recommended that the AFN work with ISC to finalize the Research and Learning & Innovations in Education Program Guidelines. This program was once an ISC national selection process; however, with the new Program Guidelines, First Nations will have control over the funds and can implement the programs using their preferred regional allocation methodology.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

1. Post-Secondary Education (PSE) – The Post-Secondary Education Review process was completed in June 2018, with the publication of the *First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review 2018 Interim Report*. The Chiefs-in-Assembly passed AFN Resolution 29/2018, *First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review Report and Recommendations*, which accepted the *First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review 2018 Interim Report* and directed the AFN, the CCOE, and the NIEC to work in partnership with ISC to develop an honourable joint process that would allow for the development of regional Post-Secondary Education models.

From September 2018 to November 2018, the NIEC worked in partnership with ISC to develop the First Nations Post-Secondary Education Policy Proposal that would be the First Nations option for policy change in an ISC Memo to Cabinet on Indigenous Post-Secondary Education, set to go to Cabinet in 2019. With an overall budgetary ask of \$1.7 billion, the policy proposal focuses on three priority areas: Immediate investments to support First Nations post-secondary





education; modernization of existing Indigenous Services Canada PSE programs; and the opportunity for the development of Treaty based, self-government based, and/or regional PSE models. The proposed changes reaffirmed First Nations jurisdiction over First Nations education, and ensures that students and First Nations Institutes of Higher Learning are better supported to close the attainment gap in post-secondary education.

In response to the policy proposal and through Budget 2019, the Government of Canada provided \$327.5 million over five years to renew and expand funding for the Post-Secondary Student Support Program while the government engages with First Nations on the development of long-term First Nations-led PSE models. The funding profile for this investment is: \$50 million in year one; \$60 million in year two; and \$70 million in each of years three through five. Following Budget 2019, the NIEC and the CCOE have continued to work towards modernizing PSE programs for students and institutions, including initiating engagement of a First Nations-led PSE model.

2. Early Childhood Education (ECE) –

The joint task team examined regional differences and best practices regarding the implementation of full-time K4/K5 in First Nations schools. The Task Team met on May 3–4, 2018, and November 6–7, 2018, and further emphasized the need to focus on infrastructure, instruction, and activities for regions to expand to full time K4/K5. The Team's recommendations informed the K-12 policy proposal:

- 1) For ISC to provide First Nations funding to expand access to full-time equivalent and provide adequate, predictable and

sustainable supplementary funding for quality K4/K5 on reserve; and

- 2) For First Nations to have the option to have Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) be financially supported by nominal roll.

In the K-12 Terms and Conditions, the major changes impacting K4/K5 include: 1) Facilities: children ages 4 and 5 can attend an early learning program in a certified school or in a rented non-school building facility, this includes AHSOR facilities; 2) Educators: Early Childhood Educators or certified teachers are both eligible as classroom instructors/educators; and 3) Curriculum: core funding allocations from the new funding formula can be used to purchase, adapt, and develop curriculum for kindergarten, especially important where K4 is not offered by the province. K4/K5 curriculum is up to the communities' discretion. Regions can now begin to implement fulltime K4/K5 starting in 2019/20.

3. Education Infrastructure – First Nations members of the task team met for the third time on May 23, 2019, to identify future policy objectives and recommendations for the NIEC and the CCOE. The recommendations were presented to the CCOE on June 5, 2019, in Yellowknife, NWT, and it was recommended that additional information on First Nations education infrastructure policies be presented to the NIEC on June 24, 2019. The first recommendations being made by First Nations members of the Education Infrastructure Task Team were:

1. First Nations members of the Education Infrastructure Task Team agree that while First Nations education



infrastructure needs are diverse, the following areas have been initially identified as needing policy review:

- i. School Space Accommodations Standards (SSAS);
- ii. Level of Service Standards and Management of Teacherages;
- iii. Tendering Policy for Federally Funded Education Capital Projects for First Nations;
- iv. Education Infrastructure Ownership and Financing;
- v. Budget Review of Education Infrastructure Capital.

In keeping with the principle of First Nations control of First Nations Education, First Nations members of the Education Infrastructure Task Team will lead a comprehensive review of all current federal programs that support education infrastructure. This will include reviewing the Education Infrastructure Task Team Operational Terms.

2. A resolution be drafted allowing the Assembly of First Nations, the National Indian Education Council and the Chiefs Committee on Education to engage in education infrastructure policy review with the Government of Canada.

4. Unique Needs of Northern and Remote Communities – This Joint Task Team met on May 3–4 and August 8–9, 2018. The Team will continue to expand on the work plan and critical path for 2019–2020, including prioritizing the development of a paper around recruitment and retention in remote First Nations schools. The Team will continue to provide recommendations and feedback to research being conducted on Cost Drivers in First Nations Elementary and Secondary

Schools in Northern and Remote Communities and inform the work of the other task teams.

5. K-12 Funding Experts Task Team – The Task Team was created to support the work of regional technical tables by providing a platform to communicate best practices, share information, discuss challenges and solutions regarding the interim regional funding approaches, and to review existing and future costing research for K-12 Education funding.

On September 21–22, 2018, the Task Team recommended that the AFN commission research to identify the non-salary cost drivers that could be used to calculate the higher costs of delivering education programs and services in northern, isolated, and remote communities. This report uses the remoteness definition set out by the National Joint Council (NJC), which assesses the degree of remoteness based on three factors: population, climate and access. This study was completed by Moazzami Consultants Inc. and Chignecto Consulting Group Inc.

In order to maximize support for regional technical tables and the sharing of information, the AFN Education Sector held the first K-12 Education Transformation Forum on May 23–24, 2019, in Toronto, ON. The Forum provided a platform for sharing information, exchanging best practices, and highlighting the regional experiences from a number of presenters and K-12 Experts Funding Task Team members. Topics included regional experiences, funding priorities workshops, developing skills and experiences, and stages of implementation sessions.





6. Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope – Youth Calls to Action

The AFN National Youth Council, in addition to the AFN Education Sector, supported the coordination of a First Nations Youth Policy Forum that took place February 2019, in Ottawa, ON. The purpose of this forum was for First Nations youth from across the country to discuss issues and priorities in education, and to provide them with the opportunity to share their perspectives with policy and decision-makers. The result of this forum created 5 Calls to Action, which can be read in the National Youth Council Report.

- Ensure that Education Infrastructure progresses alongside all aspects of education transformation so that safe and adequate infrastructure is available for First Nations students and teachers.
- Continue to further the Raised Voices: Carriers of Hope – Youth Calls to Action on Education.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Continue to support First Nations involved in K-12 education transformation and local, Treaty, and Regional Education Agreements.
- On October 8–9, 2019, the AFN Education Sector will be hosting the second First Nations Education Transformation Forum in Calgary, AB, at the Westin Airport Hotel. This Forum is an opportunity to come together and share and learn from our local, regional, and Treaty-based experiences in implementing the new policy and funding approach for First Nations K-12 education.
- Support First Nations vision of lifelong learning and the engagement/development of local, Treaty, and Regional post-secondary education models.





Environment Sector

The Environment Sector focuses on all environmentally-based issues affecting First Nations. Environment staff work directly with and are supported by a Chiefs Committee called the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment (ACE), as well as two technical advisory committees: the Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA); and the First Nations Advisory Committee on Species at Risk (FNACSAR), both of which are mandated by way of resolutions. The Environment Sector is active on a range of key environmental issues, while also maintaining a broad focus on other issues that evolve from year to year.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Climate Change

With the support of the ACE, the Environment Sector has participated in Canada's Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Action (PCF) process, which commenced in 2016 and led to the establishment of a bilateral First Nation-Canada technical table on climate change, the Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA). The JCCA is a co-development table between First Nations and federal officials focused on climate policy. The JCCA, with First Nations technical representation from across the country, has been working with Canada for the past 18 months, advancing First Nations interests and priorities alongside Canada's own approach. Its first Annual Report was issued to the Prime Minister and the National Chief in early 2019.

The Environment Sector has also provided funding to enable each region to hire a Regional Climate Change Coordinator to better coordinate climate information

sharing and action with First Nations. A National Climate Change Coordinator is also now in place to support this work at the national level.

Environmental and Regulatory Reviews

In 2016, the Government of Canada announced the review of key environmental legislation, including the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA), the modernization of the National Energy Board (NEB), the *Navigation Protection Act* (NPA), and the *Fisheries Act*. In February 2018, the federal government introduced legislation which would amend or replace three of these acts. Unfortunately, Bill C-69: *An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act*, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, failed to make it through the legislative process before the end of this Parliamentary session

The Environment Sector, with guidance from the ACE and the Chiefs-in-Assembly, has been very active on this file and several resolutions were passed in recent years reflecting First Nations' interests with respect to this issue, most recently Resolution 07/ 2018 – *Addressing First Nations Rights, Title, and Jurisdiction in Bill C-69: Impact Assessment Act, Canadian Energy Regulator Act, and the Navigation Protection Act*. The Environment Sector has facilitated a variety of information sessions and technical meetings across the country for all of these Reviews in an effort to support First Nations in their direct engagement with the Crown.





Species at Risk

The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) was jointly developed with First Nations in the 1990s to prevent wildlife from becoming extinct and to determine actions for their recovery, in accordance with Canada's international commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The SARA is also the only piece of federal legislation that explicitly recognizes the critical role of Indigenous Peoples in its administration and implementation, through the establishment of the National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk (NACOSAR), an advisory committee to the Minister.

In 2017, the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change agreed to establish a First Nations-specific, technical advisory body, the First Nations Advisory Committee on Species at Risk (FNACSAR). The FNACSAR has now met on six occasions, including with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans via a Ministerial roundtable, held in April 2019. The focus of the technical advisory body is improving the application and implementation of the SARA, in addition to strategic planning and priority identification with First Nations. The FNACSAR is comprised of First Nations technical representation from across Canada.

The Environment Sector also continues to be involved in meetings of the CBD, with a current focus on the development of the post-2020 global framework for biodiversity, as well as the future of the Working Group on Article 8(j) of the CBD, which focuses on Indigenous Knowledge. The ACE provides ongoing oversight to support engagement on Species at Risk issues, including the CBD.

Pathway to Target 1

Canada established the Pathway to Target 1 initiative based on an international commitment arising from the Convention on Biological Diversity. This target calls for the conservation of 17 per cent of terrestrial areas, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, by 2020, through the establishment of networks of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). Canada has worked to engage First Nations through a variety of mechanisms, with the direct participation of First Nations representatives at all levels, and the creation of an Indigenous Circle of Experts (ICE). In March 2018, the ICE presented its final report, *We Rise Together: Achieving Pathway to Canada Target 1 through the Creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas in the Spirit and Practice of Reconciliation*, with recommendations to the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change. The overall Pathway Report, *One with Nature*, was released in February 2019.

The federal Pathway initiative has now shifted to what is being referred to as the implementation phase, with the goal of identifying real and practical ways of achieving Canada Target 1 by implementing many of the recommendations received during Phase 1, in particular through the establishment of IPCAs. To address this important conversation, the AFN Environment Sector has established an IPCA sub-working group of the ACE that is comprised of ACE members and former First Nations members from the Indigenous Circle of Experts, to be guided by a National Coordinator. The Pathway process is

expected to continue through to 2020 and beyond.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Ongoing advancement of climate-related issues in coordination with the ACE, the JCCA, and Regional Climate Change Coordinators.
- Ongoing advocacy relating to Environmental and Regulatory Reviews currently underway, specifically with regards to Bill C-69.
- Ongoing efforts to support First Nations as leaders in conservation and stewardship action.





Fisheries Sector

The AFN Fisheries Sector is guided by the AFN National Fisheries Committee (NFC). The NFC is co-chaired by NB/PEI Regional Chief Roger Augustine and BC Regional Chief Terry Teegee. Directed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly, the NFC is made up of Chiefs and technical representatives from the 10 AFN Regions, who advise and support the collective interests of First Nations in Canada with respect to issues related to commercial fisheries, marine spatial planning, oceans governance, inland fisheries, aquaculture, species-at-risk, Indigenous knowledge systems and Supreme Court of Canada decisions.

The creation of the AFN Fisheries Sector was announced on April 30, 2018. After a national search and competitive process, Ken Paul became the Director of Fisheries on September 4, 2018. The Fisheries Sector staff includes Associate Director, Audrey Mayes, along with three policy analysts and an administrative assistant. The AFN Fisheries Sector advocates for federal legislation, policies and programs to support the implementation of Aboriginal and Treaty rights aimed at establishing self-governing fisheries.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

National Chief meets with DFO Minister Wilkinson

On December 10, 2018, National Chief Perry Bellegarde, the AFN Fisheries Sector, and NFC member Chief Dalton Silver met with Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard (DFO) in Ottawa, ON. The National Chief requested that the AFN be jointly involved with developing Aquaculture legislation, and that the DFO provides financial support for a

National Fisheries Forum and increases support for Inland fisheries related for the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. Chief Silver articulated the need for movement on the Fraser Salmon Management Council, explaining some problems with inaction at the DFO Pacific Regional office. The Minister was receptive to the requests and expressed openness to attending the next AFN National Fisheries Committee meeting in February 2019.

The AFN National Fisheries Committee

The NFC is a national venue to share and coordinate various regional perspectives on federal legislation, policies, and programs. Its highest aim is to support the implementation of Aboriginal and Treaty rights to aid in establishing self-governing fisheries. The AFN Fisheries Sector depends on the NFC's guidance to support advocacy on Canada's fisheries policies impacting First Nations rights. The Fisheries Sector seeks to affirm First Nations' rightful role in the management of fish and fish habitat and the governance of all waters, oceans or freshwater.

On February 27, 2019, DFO Minister Wilkinson met with the NFC in Ottawa, ON. The discussion included Supreme Court decisions, the Fraser Salmon Management Council, the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corp, inland fisheries support, co-development of the *Aquaculture Act*, the use of Indigenous Knowledge, the Ocean Protection Plan, Aboriginal Aquatic Resources and Oceans Management renewal, the DFO's new Arctic Region, and the AFN's National Fisheries Forum proposal. The DFO's response to all items will be discussed at subsequent meetings of the NFC.





Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (CCFAM)

Miawpukek First Nation Chief Misel Joe and the Director of the AFN Fisheries, Ken Paul, presented to the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (CCFAM) in December 2018, in St. John's, NL. They highlighted the importance of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in First Nations governance and fisheries management. They expressed the need to include First Nations in the work and decision-making of the Council, specifically, on the six interprovincial task groups: aquaculture, inland fisheries, marketing, Bill C-68 implementation, invasive species, and oceans. There was a general indication that the AFN would be invited to the next CCFAM meeting scheduled for the summer of 2019.

Bill C-68 Fisheries Act

The National Fisheries Committee Co-Chair, Regional Chief Terry Teegee, and AFN Director of Fisheries, Ken Paul, presented to the Senate Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans on May 7, 2019. The AFN's submission on Bill C-68, *An Act to Amend the Fisheries Act and other Acts in Consequence*, focused on overarching issues such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a Guiding Reconciliation Framework, and the reaffirmation of First Nations' inherent and constitutionally-protected Section 35 rights. Additionally, it addressed how to properly treat the cumulative impacts of previous, bad law, including broadening the public registry, protecting water flows as part of fish habitat, reducing excessive Ministerial discretion, and the full inclusion and protection of Indigenous Knowledge Systems within the Act.

Bill C-55 Oceans Act

National Fisheries Committee member for British Columbia, Chief Dalton Silver, and the Director of AFN Fisheries presented on behalf of the NFC to the Senate Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans on February 21, 2019, to address the amendments to the *Oceans Act*. The AFN submission focused on the protection of First Nations' rights and jurisdiction, Indigenous Protected and Conserved Marine Areas, and the designation, monitoring, and surveillance of Interim Marine Protected Areas. The *Oceans Act* was successfully amended, along with the *Canada Petroleum Resources Act*, to facilitate the development of Marine Protected Areas, and restrict oil and gas development within these areas. Many First Nations remain concerned about the development and operations of Marine Protected Areas and we look forward to the expansion of this work with coastal First Nations and their regional organizations.

Bill C-69 Impact Assessment Act

The AFN Fisheries Sector has been supporting the Environment Sector in the analysis of Bill C-69. Specifically, the Fisheries Sector has been focusing its efforts on the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act* amendments to assess the potential impacts on First Nations. The Fisheries Sector co-led two, regional First Nation dialogue sessions to allow First Nations to understand how the process for additions to minor works and lack of baseline data may affect their inherent, Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

Aquaculture Working Group

The National Aquaculture Working Group, a technical working group of the NFC, began





discussions on the development of a new *Aquaculture Act* and new draft regulations under the *Fisheries Act*, in consequence. These initial engagements are in preparation for the co-development of an Indigenous Engagement Plan to prepare First Nations for consultations on the new legislation in the fall of 2019. This work will also include the general aquaculture regulations (GAR), which are being proposed by the DFO to support an ecosystem approach to aquaculture management.

National Inland Working Group

The National Inland Working Group, a technical working group of the NFC, met twice to discuss the Ministerial Advisory Panel on the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) and marketing and partnership opportunities. The DFO reported that over 90 per cent of the clientele that use the FFMC services are Indigenous fishers and that it has a direct impact on many First Nations. In March 2019, the AFN was able to organize a meeting between the Ministerial Advisory Panel and the Inland Working Group allowing members to provide direct feedback ahead of the final report being presented to DFO Minister Wilkinson in the spring of 2019.

Oceans Working Group

The AFN Oceans Working Group met in January and March of 2019. The main focus of the group was the Marine Spatial Planning. This is a management approach that takes into consideration all activities in ocean spaces and seeks to balance human activity with marine protection. The DFO has designated five large marine areas to coordinate under their Marine Spatial Planning regime and the AFN Oceans

Working Group has been learning about their approach and is advising the NFC on their potential impacts including the need for proper governance models. Additionally, the Ocean Working Group has worked with Parks Canada on the policy renewal for National Marine Conservation Areas. This work will continue to evolve in 2019-20.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

In the coming year, the AFN Fisheries Sector will be renewing its plans and strategic priorities, but it remains focused on key mandates provided through resolutions. Many of these resolutions have instructed the Secretariat to seek funding for the work described therein. In the 2019-20 fiscal year, the Fisheries Sector has drafted proposals for the following federal departments, mandated by the listed resolutions:

- Department of Fisheries and Oceans - in response to Resolution 04/2018, *First Nations Role in Changes to the Fisheries Act*, and in partial response to Resolution 61/2018, *Respect, Protection, and Preservation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems*.
- Transport Canada - Oceans Protection Plan & First Nations inclusion in marine emergency response is a result of Resolution 52/2018, *First Nations inclusion in Canada's Oceans Protection Plan*, Resolution 93/2016, *Marine Emergency Information Management Protocol*, and Resolution 06/2018, *Engaging First Nations on Marine Vessels and Salvage Operations*)
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans Species-at-Risk in marine and aquatic environments proposal is in partial response to Resolution 04/2018, *First Nations Role in Changes to the Fisheries Act*, Resolution 05/2018,



First Nations Oceans Working Group and the Oceans Act and Marine Protected Areas, Resolution 18/2018, Support for further study on the targeted management of seal and sea lion populations and the development of targeted management, and Resolution 79/2018, Yukon Salmon Treaty.

- Department of Fisheries and Oceans to begin discussions on Aquaculture legislative co-development is mandated by Resolution 33/2017, *Aquaculture Legislative and Policy Reviews.*

During this 2019 Annual General Assembly, the National Fisheries Committee will be convened to support the self-determination and jurisdiction of First Nations over all fisheries resources. The Committee works through consensus, and supports, promotes and protects the advancement of First Nations' inherent fishing rights and title, including Treaty rights to all aquatic and ocean resources, and marine habitats contained within their territories.

This Annual General Assembly will conclude an extraordinarily active year for the newly-formed Fisheries Sector. The Annual General Assembly will feature a discussion, by the First Nations named in major Supreme Court of Canada decisions (*ex. R. v. Gladstone*), about Canada's implementation of these decisions within its laws and policies.

Leading up to the 2019 Annual General Assembly, the Eel Ground (Natoaganeg) First Nation is engaging in a Treaty fishery for snow crab to protest DFO's continued denial to provide the First Nation access to a moderate livelihood fishery for this species. The Fisheries Sector will monitor this emerging situation. It is for situations such as these that the NFC has continued to

advocate for an emergency response protocol to ensure the safety of the First Nations fishermen and leadership, and provide clear information in a timely fashion.





Health Sector

Despite having some of the poorest health outcomes in Canada, and extremely inadequate resources to address them, First Nations are charting a path forward to transforming their health and wellness systems. While the work to close the health gap continues, First Nations' ongoing commitment, strength and resiliency in their wellness journeys must be uplifted, acknowledged and celebrated.

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Health Sector is mandated to protect, maintain, promote, support and advocate for First Nations' Inherent, Treaty and international rights, and working towards the holistic health and well-being of First Nations. This is achieved through policy analysis, communications, holding governments to account and, most importantly, advocacy supporting First Nations. A central goal of the AFN Health Sector is First Nations' control of the development and delivery of all health services and programs. The AFN Health Sector continues to advance the *First Nations Health Transformation Agenda* (FNHTA, 2017) by focusing on its three main pillars: Getting the Relationships Right, Support First Nations Capacity First, and Meaningful Investments in First Nations Health. For more information on the work and priorities of the Health Sector go to: www.health.afn.ca.

GETTING THE RELATIONSHIPS RIGHT

Getting the relationships right with First Nations is important for all of those within the healthcare world, but in particular for federal, provincial, and territorial governments. This means working with First Nations in a way that respects First Nations right to self-determination, supported by their Treaty, inherent and international

rights. The FNHTA seeks to push federal, provincial, and territorial actors to engage with First Nations rights-holders in building these vital relationships. Health care in Canada is complex due to the different roles of provinces, territories, and the federal government in delivering health services and providing funding for First Nations health. Furthermore, the Canadian government has never formally acknowledged its legal and Treaty obligations to First Nations health. AFN Resolution 69/2017, *Exploring a Legislative Base for First Nations Health*, mandated the Health Sector to examine options related to federal First Nations health legislation. This was done through holding a dialogue session at the 2018 Annual General Assembly and working with a legal team to develop a discussion paper. The AFN Health Sector is working with the Chiefs Committee on Health (CCoH) to continue this discussion.

Key Issues and Activities

The AFN Health Sector continues to push for governments and health organizations to work closely with our First Nations regional partners to understand their diverse regional perspectives and facilitate respectful conversations and connections between different organizations. The following highlights some of the work being done to support this fundamental pillar.

Cultural safety and humility in health-care settings

Systemic changes to the health care system to address the racism and discrimination experienced by First Nations must occur in order for relationships to be respectful. In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, health





organizations and governments are putting increased efforts into cultural humility and safety. The AFN Health Sector has been invited to participate in a number of initiatives, including the development of a Cultural Competency Curriculum by the First Nations Inuit and Health Branch (FNIHB). Initial conversations about establishing a federal/provincial/territorial working group to address cultural safety in health care settings were begun in response to the issue of the forced sterilization of Indigenous women (mandated through Resolution 22/2018, *Redress for the Forced Sterilization of Indigenous Women*).

The AFN Health Sector continues to advocate for broader First Nations inclusion in these discussions. The Health Sector emphasizes the importance of ensuring that First Nations diversity is considered and captured throughout this work and that existing models are adapted, expanded or enhanced, rather than reinvented.

Engagement Protocols

In 2018, AFN Health Sector developed a guidance document – *Getting the Relationships Right: Guiding Principles for Working in Partnership with the AFN Health Sector* – for organizations interested in working with the AFN Health Sector. This document is shared with new organizations that approach AFN and it is utilized as a measure for evaluating the appropriateness of potential collaborative opportunities.

The *AFN-FNIHB Engagement Protocol* was developed in 2014 to guide the working relationship between the FNIHB, then under Health Canada, and the AFN. Given the transition of FNIHB to Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), and the greater regionalization

of health for First Nations, at a joint meeting of the CCoH and FNIHB’s Senior Management Committee in March 2019, the need was identified for a revised version of the protocol, led by First Nations representatives appointed by the CCoH, that formalizes an agreement including Ministerial presence at future joint meetings and considers the relationship with additional government departments working on health (i.e. Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada).

Federal Working Groups: Joint Review of Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB)

The AFN’s work on NIHB has centered on the AFN-FNIHB NIHB Joint Review, called for in 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 began in 2014 and is guided by the Joint Review Steering Committee (JRSC), made up of equal representation of First Nations and FNIHB staff, including Assistant Deputy Ministers.

To date, the JRSC has fully reviewed five benefit areas, including, the Mental Health Crisis Counselling Intervention Benefit (2016), the Vision Benefit (2018), the Dental Benefit (2018), Pharmacy (2019), and Medical Supplies and Equipment (2019). Recommendations and implementation plans were developed and endorsed by the JRSC. Work has begun on the final benefit review for Medical Transportation. The AFN continues to advocate to ensure that actions resulting from this work be implemented and properly funded. This includes ongoing advocacy for the inclusion of medical





cannabis in the NIHB formulary under Resolution 03/2017, *NIHB Coverage of Medical Cannabis*. NIHB has committed to reviewing coverage for synthetic cannabinoids; however, a stronger evidence base for medical cannabis is required before it will be added to the formulary.

The NIHB Joint Review is a valuable process for having discussions with government on the concerns raised by First Nations in regards to NIHB. The presence of senior government officials has allowed for decisions to be made at the table and provided opportunities for high-level discussions. While there is much work to come and the dialogue will continue, the process to date has allowed for increased communications, provided opportunities to advocate for increased transparency (e.g. through the development the NIHB Evaluation and Monitoring Framework), increased First Nations input into NIHB (e.g. through representation on NIHB's independent advisory committees), and a commitment to have ongoing First Nations input into NIHB (Resolution 74/2018, *Non-Insured Health Benefits: Ongoing Commitment to a Joint Process*).

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Advocate for First Nations inclusion into discussions on Cultural Safety and Humility and emphasize the need to have constructive rather than redundant dialogues;
- Update the AFN-FNIHB Engagement Protocol to reflect revised federal arrangements;
- Continue discussions on formalizing ongoing First Nations input into NIHB;

- Ongoing advocacy for the implementation of actions resulting from the NIHB Joint Review.

Support First Nations Capacity First

Support First Nations Capacity First means supporting First Nations people, communities and organizations to build capacity in the area of health and wellness, rather than turning to mainstream organizations to do the work on behalf of First Nations. First Nations have the right and the knowledge to develop their own healthcare and health systems solutions. To foster self-determination, sustainability and efficiency, the missing link continues to be capacity support.

Key Issues and Activities

A key element of this pillar is support for the work of First Nations-led health organizations such as the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation, the First Peoples Wellness Circle, the First Nations Information Governance Centre, the First Nations Health Managers Association, the National Aboriginal Council of Midwives, and the Canadian Indigenous Nurses Association. Their expertise must be accommodated in national dialogues on health.

Beyond this, the AFN Health Sector utilizes and promotes the uptake of First Nations led frameworks and strategies. For example, the *First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework* (FNWMCF, 2015), developed by the AFN, the FNIHB and Indigenous mental health leaders, includes a mental wellness service continuum and outlines opportunities to strengthen existing mental wellness programming for First Nations. It continues to guide much of the work of the AFN Health





Sector and is used as an ongoing advocacy tool for First Nations-led, culturally relevant mental wellness solutions, as per Resolution 22/2014, *Support for the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework*. The Continuum was used as the basis for the development of *First Nations Health Priorities to Reducing Problematic Opioid Use—Discussion Document: A First Nations-Specific Opioid Strategy, 2018*, as per Resolution 82/2016, *Development of a First Nations Opioid Strategy*. The strategy was produced in partnership with the AFN Mental Wellness Committee, First Nations Health Managers Association, the CCoH, and the Health Technicians Network. It highlights priorities for action and collaboration to address the opioid crisis amongst First Nations. Resolution 89/2018, *Response to the ongoing opioid and methamphetamine crisis*, highlights the need for continued First Nations led work in the areas of mental wellness and substance misuse.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Continued advocacy for ensuring that First Nations-led health organizations are seen as leaders and experts in the field, and are invited to discussions related to their fields.
- Ongoing work with the FNMWCF Implementation Team in implementing the framework.
- Utilize the *First Nations Opioid Strategy* to advocate for actions that address the opioid crisis amongst First Nations.
- Develop a First Nations-led response to increased methamphetamine misuse in First Nations.

Meaningful Investments in First Nations Health

Meaningful Investments in First Nations Health speaks to the need for significant and immediate investments in program areas across the board. First Nations health systems are profoundly underfunded; a fact which contributes significantly to the overall poor health outcomes of First Nations people. Funding needs to be sustainable; changes in health outcomes will not occur quickly, and funding needs to be supportive of these processes, as well as support long-term planning and capacity. The AFN Health Sector advocates for funding to be provided outside of siloed funding structures, allowing flexibility, while addressing diverse determinants of health and considering a continuum of care perspective.

Key Issues and Activities

Persistent public health dilemmas like communicable diseases, substance misuse, chronic disease, emerging environmental threats (Resolution 58/2018, *First Nations Response to Chronic Wasting Disease*), food insecurity (Resolution 87/2018, *Support communities to access proper nutrition*) and access to safe health services (Resolution 88/2018, *Support the Development of Wholistic First Nations Wellness Facilities*) reinforce the call for upstream interventions. Closing the gaps in health, specifically the unequal distribution of disease and its determinants, requires First Nations involvement in all discussions and decisions, and the resources to address these gaps.

First Nations conceptions of holism are being adopted in practice as we move towards more broad, upstream, and interdisciplinary approaches that promote a continuum of





care approach across a person's lifespan, rather than addressing isolated symptoms of larger problems. The recent move of the FNIHB from Health Canada to ISC has provided an opportunity to engage in conversations with government in regards to programming and funding from this lens.

- Ongoing advocacy for fully-funded culturally-based supports for survivors of Indian Residential Schools, the 60's Scoop, Indian Day Schools, and those impacted by the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA.

With the future of the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program being unclear beyond 2021, and the emerging issues of the 60's Scoop, Indian Day Schools, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA there is an ongoing need for sustainable and flexible investments to support these survivors (Resolution 37/2018, *Supporting Manitoba Region Indian Residential School Health Support Program*, Resolution 91/2018, *Action for Experimentation Survivors*). To continue to build on the work of the FNMWCF, investments in continuum of care approaches that consider the constant need for mental wellness and substance use supports must continue and address both short-term crisis response needs and long-term planning.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Continue to push for substantive, long-term and flexible funding for First Nations health that supports holistic wellness, and allows for multiple social determinants of health to be addressed simultaneously.
- Challenge the siloed funding and program structures within FNIHB and ISC to allow for greater flexibility in providing continuum of care and lifespan approaches to wellness.



Housing, Infrastructure, Emergency Management Services Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Housing, Infrastructure, and Emergency Management Services Sector (HIEM Sector) is composed of a Water Unit, Housing Unit and Emergency Management Services Unit.

The core areas of engagement for the 2018-2019 fiscal year were: modernizing and reforming the Operations and Maintenance policies of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to achieve 100% funding of First Nations infrastructure; further developing the 10 Year National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy; working with Public Safety Canada on a national inventory of emergency capabilities; and repealing and replacing the problematic *Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act*. Other focus areas for the HIEM Sector include matters related to particular issues, such as, the Cat Lake First Nation housing crisis, the ongoing Kashechewan First Nation evacuation crisis, transboundary water issues in Manitoba and British Columbia, and ongoing emergency issues related to climate change. The focus of the Sector's advocacy is improvement of First Nations infrastructure, understood broadly, holistically, and inclusively. The financial value associated with the HIEM Sector's advocacy is approximately \$2.75 billion from 2015-2019 for water infrastructure related issues alone.

In February 2019, the Sector also successfully delivered its second annual National Water Symposium in Niagara Falls, and its third annual National Housing and Infrastructure Forum in Montreal in November 2018. It also hosted two think-tanks, one on water legislation and the other pertaining to on and off-reserve housing managers.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Water Unit

First Nations continue to face urgent and unsafe drinking water conditions. Long-term drinking water advisories remain in effect in First Nations across the country. The federal government has committed to eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories (DWAs) on public systems on reserve by 2021 and has allocated resources to achieve that commitment. Part of achieving—and maintaining—the elimination of all DWAs is the creation of legislation that adequately, properly, and respectfully fills the regulatory gap regarding safe drinking water on reserves. Budget 2016 provided \$1.8 billion over five years and Budget 2018 provided an additional \$172.6 million over three years, beginning in 2018-19, to improve access to clean and safe drinking water on reserves. Budget 2019 allocated a further \$133 million over two years to ensure that DWAs, once addressed, do not return.

The *Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act* (SDWFNA) came into force on November 1, 2013, and authorized the government to develop enforceable federal regulations to ensure access to safe, clean, and reliable drinking water, the effective treatment of wastewater, and the protection of sources of drinking water on First Nations land. At the 2015 AFN Annual General Assembly (AGA), Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who was just the leader of the Liberal Party at the time, indicated that the Act was an example of “the government dictating terms rather than working in partnership to support First Nations governance”. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), now Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), was proceeding with its engagement strategy on





this problematic legislation, unilaterally, and had not indicated they would adequately address outstanding concerns with the SDWFNA. First Nations concerns include the lack of meaningful engagement on the SDWFNA with regards to both Bill S-11 and Bill S-8, the incorporation of provincial regulations, the lack of funding associated with the SDWFNA, and the increased liability placed on First Nations to meet regulations. Engagements by the federal department began in mid-June 2017, and proceeded until September 2017, despite calls by First Nations for those engagements to cease.

The SDWFNA is unacceptable and ineffective in meeting the basic human right of access to clean water and sanitation. The federal government has made clear commitments to ensure First Nations have equity with non-First Nations in terms of water quality standards and access. This commitment builds on the advocacy of 2017-2018 fiscal year and ISC has now acknowledged that a First Nations led process to deal with the current legislation is needed. Therefore in 2018-2019, the focus of the AFN Water Unit has been further refining the co-development process for repeal and replacement of the SDWFNA. The core focus has been national engagement with First Nations all across Canada, led by the AFN regions, to properly understand and incorporate their needs and aspirations into the co-developed repeal and replacement legislation.

AFN Resolution 26/2018, *Support for a First Nations Preliminary Concepts*, further refined the co-development process initiated with Resolution 88/2017, *First Nations led Engagement Process for Safe Drinking Water Legislation*, and Resolution 01/2018,

First Nations Led Process to Develop New Federal Safe Drinking Water Legislation.

The Water Unit hosted the Second Annual National Water Symposium and Tradeshow in February 2019 in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

Forthcoming activities include completing the National Engagement process and incorporation of the feedback from First Nations into the Joint Working Group tasked with preparing a draft framework for the repeal and replacement legislation. Due to the forthcoming federal election, there will be a period where the federal government is unable to actively participate in this process; the AFN Water Unit will use this time to further engage First Nations on refinement of the draft framework.

A significant issue arose in late 2018 when the AFN Water Unit was informed by ISC that, due to a holdback on the Budget 2016 monies (\$1.8 billion over 5 years), they were required to table to Cabinet a 'Long-Term Plan' for First Nations water infrastructure post 2021. After engagement with the Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure (CCoHI) and detailed review with the Technicians Committee, the AFN informed ISC that this 'Long-Term Plan' must be co-developed with First Nations. This will be exceedingly challenging because ISC must table this plan by March of 2020. In late 2019 and early 2020, the AFN Water Unit will work on rapid engagement with First Nations to assess preferred options for co-developing the First Nations Long-Term Strategy.

In late 2018, an Emergency Resolution was passed focusing on a particular contaminant





being assessed for the Canadian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines. Resolution 98/2018, *Health Canada 1, 4-Dioxane Guideline Consultation*, mandated the AFN Water Unit to engage with the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Committee that creates the Drinking Water Quality Guidelines to improve the process and resource First Nations to participate meaningfully in the assessment and creation of Drinking Water Quality Guidelines.

Housing Unit

10 Year National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy

In December 2017, the Chiefs adopted Resolution 87/2017, *Support for a National Housing and Infrastructure Policy Reform Framework*, a national housing framework co-developed with Canada through the Joint Working Group (JWG). That was the first major piece in a jointly developed, multi-year plan to put the care and management of First Nations housing under the control of First Nations' regional housing authorities. The plan included a series of annual National Housing and Infrastructure Forums, starting in 2016, that helped inform First Nations and create national momentum for the transition to First Nations control. The third National Housing Forum was held in Vancouver in October 2018.

Canada announced its 10-year, \$40 billion National Housing Strategy (NHS) in November 2017, and then updated its budget to \$55 billion on April 11, 2019. As part of the NHS, Canada indicated it was working with the AFN to develop a National First Nations Housing Strategy as one element of its broader NHS. The 2018 Federal Budget announced an additional \$600 million for

First Nations housing over three years as a "down payment" of sorts to start funding the First Nations strategy. The expectation is that the federal government will provide significant additional funds when current work is completed, as described below.

Since the 2018 AFN Annual General Assembly in Vancouver, BC, the CCoHI has guided the work of the HIEM Sector. The result was the Chiefs' approval by Resolution 57/2018, *National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy*. A key component of the Strategy is an AFN-led data gathering exercise on housing and related infrastructure. Started in late 2018, the study is due to be completed in the fall of 2019. The AFN contracted two First Nations organizations, Alberta's First Nations Technical Services Advisory Group Inc., which developed a digital application for use by First Nations across Canada to gather the data, and the First Nations Information Governance Centre, which will analyze the data and securely store it. The AFN contracted First Nations organizations in all regions to oversee and manage the completion of a housing conditions questionnaire. The result will be the first, First Nation-led database on housing that will identify the real needs in housing, and thus the real cost. The federal government has committed to fund the implementation of the Strategy.

Another important part of the plan to develop a 10 Year National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy was to convene a series of national, expert think-tanks on various housing subjects. As a follow-up to two successful think-tank sessions in early 2018, a think-tank on urban Indigenous housing providers was held in late August 2018. It was historic, gathering





many urban Indigenous housing providers from numerous regions to begin a dialogue and relationship with the AFN. Those relationships are crucial to the implementation of the First Nations directive in AFN Resolution 57/2018 to provide housing support services to their members wherever they live.

Non-Housing Related Infrastructure

AFN Resolution 86/2018, *Realizing a National First Nations Youth Build Canada Program*, calls for a data gathering exercise to determine the non-housing related infrastructure gap, and explores the development of options and recommendations for a mechanism(s) that delivers direct federal government infrastructure funding to First Nations. It also asks the AFN to urge Canada to provide capital funding to construct long-term care facilities on First Nations. One important milestone was the meeting of the AFN Executive Committee with the Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, on May 30, 2019. The Minister has a number of suggestions, including: the creation of a joint working committee or staff exchange to facilitate information exchange, that the Regional Chiefs call upon provinces that are dragging their feet on proposing cost-shared infrastructure projects, and to use First Nations traditional knowledge when developing tailored, custom, community solutions.

On-Reserve Programs and Technical Service Providers

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) made a unilateral decision in 2015 to change its delivery

service. It awarded a national contract to a single service provider, OZHI First Nations Professional Services (OZHI), to provide progress and physical condition reviews for CMHC's on-reserve programs. AFN Resolution 28/2017, *Restore Technical Services back to First Nations for CMHC Housing Programs*, called for the contract with OZHI to be rescinded, and to restore the technical services provided by First Nations, Tribal Councils, and First Nations technical service providers. As a result of the AFN and First Nations holding federal agencies accountable, CMHC is nearly complete in the transfer of technical services back to First Nations service providers in all regions, except British Columbia and Manitoba.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The AFN Housing Unit has many plans for the year ahead and next steps regarding the National Strategy. Those activities include:

- Convening regular meetings of the CCoHI, regional technicians, and the Joint Working Group for the completing the implementation plan for the national housing strategy, including analysis of housing data, costing needs, and the creation of a National First Nations Housing Policy Institute by 2020, that will provide information and advice to regional housing organizations, authorities, and First Nations directly to help them transition to eventual control of their housing systems and programs;
- Subject to ISC approval of the AFN housing budget, convene two gatherings:
 - a fourth annual National Housing and Infrastructure Forum to maintain the momentum toward



- transformative change in First Nations housing; and
- two think-tank sessions, one on skills and capacity development and the other to bring together First Nations housing managers with urban Indigenous housing providers.

Operations and Maintenance Policy Reform

AFN Resolution 80/2017, *Support for the Review of Canada's Operational and Maintenance Policy*, provides the mandate for co-development of a new O&M Policy Framework with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

The AFN engaged a consultant to provide advisory services in the development of the new O&M Policy. An O&M Experts Workshop was held in March 2018 to review existing policies, funding formulas, cost indices, and reporting requirements. It also identified policy gaps and opportunities for improvement; disparities between current cost estimates and actual costs required for infrastructure O&M on reserve where possible; and provided recommendations on how further reviews of policies, funding level options, remoteness factors, cost indices, and reporting requirements should be undertaken

Unanimous consensus from the workshop was that ISC and First Nations should initiate an Asset Management approach for community assets. Consultation should be initiated with First Nations on the recommended approach. Piloting of Asset Management Planning in each region should be initiated. The AFN and ISC are to collaborate regarding a recommendation to Cabinet for a budget allocation to support

additional Operations and Maintenance expenditures, and ISC should incorporate the asset management concept into future capital requests. The AFN is to form a working committee to guide the implementation of the above initiatives.

In 2018-2019, the AFN received support funding from ISC to develop a new draft Operations and Maintenance policy including engagement with regional organizations to seek input, comments, and recommendations on a revised policy. In fiscal year 2018/2019, the AFN provided resources to AFN regions to enable them to facilitate and host regional engagements. As of June 14, 2019, engagements have been completed in Ontario, Yukon, NWT, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec and British Columbia. It is planned that engagement in the Atlantic region and Alberta will be completed by end of June 2019.

Concurrently, the AFN is supporting regions in carrying out Asset Management Plan Pilots that will work with select First Nations to put in place fully-costed asset management plans using industry standards. To date Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and Yukon have started. The AFN is waiting or reviewing proposals from NWT, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The AFN Infrastructure Unit will continue with the regional engagements, gather First Nations' input and recommendations on what should be contained in a new Operations and Maintenance Policy. The AFN will continue to work with ISC on the co-development of the new Operations and Maintenance policy. At the time of writing,





there are plans for a status update at the 2019 AFN Annual General Assembly.

The AFN will also complete the analysis of the regional Asset Management Pilots, which are currently being carried out by various regional organizations. This project is to provide a first-level, fully-costed estimate of the difference in funding requirements identified by asset management plans versus what is currently being provided in the underfunded Operations and Maintenance funding policy. This will inform ISC of the new funding requirements of a fully-costed Asset Management Policy approach for all First Nations and support a Memorandum to Cabinet for a budget ask in early 2020.

The AFN Infrastructure Unit will also seek funding support to host a National Asset Management Forum. This forum aims to bring together best practices from First Nations and First Nations organizations along with a commitment to work with ISC towards supporting a First Nation Assets Management Plan (AMP) approach.

Emergency Management Services

Public Safety Canada (PSC)

The AFN Emergency Management Services Unit has been working with PSC and participating in a series of organized sessions to discuss the potential inclusion and participation of First Nations in the National Emergency Management Strategy, the Broadband Strategy, and the National Search and Rescue Strategy. By taking part in these initiatives, First Nations contribute to the overall pan-Canadian emergency management plan as part of a whole-of-society approach, which means it is in Canada's best interest to ensure that First

Nations have broadband connectivity, along with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to affect successful search and rescue operations. The AFN and PSC have also cooperated and collaborated on the successful Inventory of Emergency Management Capabilities in Indigenous Communities. The intent of this project is to develop an inventory of emergency management capabilities in Indigenous communities, and to better inform communities and emergency management stakeholders in the development of their emergency management regimes and the delivery of emergency response services. This inventory will also list the gaps in First Nations emergency management regimes to bring attention to the shortcomings to the appropriate agencies and to strengthen emergency management and community resilience.

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

The AFN Emergency Management Services Unit continues to cooperate with ISC on monitoring emergency events in First Nations across Canada, including floods, wildfires, social crises, and business continuity issues. The AFN also examines those instances where the delivery of emergency response services is lacking compassion and care for First Nations as agreed to in emergency services agreements. AFN Emergency Services continues to review ISC's emergency management policies affecting First Nations for cultural appropriateness and relevancy. AFN Emergency Services is also looking at the development of various funding proposals that would bring First Nations representatives to conferences that focus on the hazards and risks faced by First Nations,





such as the 2019 Wildland Fire Canada Conference.

Transport Canada

The AFN Emergency Management Services Unit is cooperating and collaborating with Transport Canada to create awareness around the Fund for Railway Accidents Involving Dangerous Goods (FRAIDG) and the Ship-sourced Oil Pollution Fund (SOPF) programs. Currently, there are 114 grade-level crossings in First Nations territories across Canada where dangerous goods are transported unbeknownst to First Nations. In addition, there are 265 First Nations living on or near Canada's internal and coastal shipping channels, where the risk of ship-sourced oil pollution are of the greatest to First Nations lives and livelihoods.

Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)

The AFN Emergency Management Services Unit is cooperating and collaborating with NRCan in developing the *Indigenous FireSmart Booklet* to create awareness and education for First Nations around the increasing severity and frequency of wildland fire. AFN Emergency Services is also involved with the development of an Earthquake tool which will be beneficial for First Nations living with earthquake risk. AFN Emergency Services also sits on the committee for Federal Flood Mapping Guidelines examining potential applications for First Nations. Wildfire and flooding are the two greatest hazards to First Nations and create the greatest amount of disruption and damage to First Nations.

Canadian Safety and Securities Program (CSSP)

The AFN Emergency Management Services Unit sits as the First Nations Advisor in the development of the Fire Risk and Evacuation Capabilities in Isolated Communities project for CSSP. While this project is aimed primarily at wildland fires, the data gathered for evacuations can also inform a similar procedure for evacuations due to flooding.

First Nations are 18 per cent more likely to be evacuated than municipalities, and suffer greater disruption to their lives and livelihoods.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

The AFN Emergency Management Services Unit is planning to hold the AFN Emergency Management Forum in September 2019 to bring together First Nations emergency management practitioners, and both provincial and federal stakeholders that have an emergency management component to their operations, and ongoing or developing relationships with First Nations in their functional areas.

The Unit is also looking at holding the second AFN Emergency Management Think Tank early in 2020 to continue the examination and development of a First Nations Emergency Management Strategy to define and confirm a way forward for First Nations emergency management.

There will also be focus on examining those instances where the provision of emergency response services to First Nations have fallen short of the written agreements, which has then had disruptive effects on the First Nations.





Lands, Territories and Resources Sector

The Lands, Territories and Resources Sector is focused on supporting the inherent rights, title and jurisdiction of First Nations by advocating for changes to four key federal policies: Additions to Reserve (ATR), Specific Claims, Comprehensive Land Claims (CLCP), and the Inherent Right to Self-Government (IRSG). Over the past number of years, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has held focused sessions on these issues with First Nations. Resolutions mandating AFN to work on these issues include:

- 47/2015 – *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*
- 08/2018 – *Implementing Canada's Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework and clarifying the role of the AFN*
- 67/2018 – *Rejection of the Recognition and Implementation of the Indigenous Rights Framework and Associated Processes*

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Additions to Reserve

Efforts to improve the Additions to Reserve (ATR) policy was the subject of a joint AFN-Canada technical working group (JWG) process that was initiated in late 2009. Progress with this working group was based on regular engagement with the Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources (CCoLTR), and ultimately resulted in the release of a new ATR policy in 2016.

Canada has formed a National Advisory Committee on ATR tasked with informing policy implementation, and developing tools and best practices to support First Nations communities engaged in the ATR process. The Advisory Committee includes the AFN and the National Aboriginal Land Managers Association (NALMA).

In December 2018, Canada unilaterally passed the *Budget Implementation Act, 2018, No. 2 (The Act)* which included a number of changes to the ATR process and resulted in AFN Resolution 94/2018, *Reject Canada's Approach to Additions to Reserve Legislation*. Subsequently, the AFN undertook an analysis of the Act and concluded that while Canada's approach to ATR legislation was ill-advised, the content of the Act was largely positive because it expanded national tools previously only available to the prairie Settlement Acts, such as pre-designation, and it expediated the bureaucratic approval process. Moving forward, Canada committed, in front of the ATR Advisory Committee, to reviewing all proposed legislation that could impact ATR.

As a next step, the AFN is advocating for the development of tools to better support First Nations in addressing third party interests within the ATR process. The ATR Advisory Committee is seeking to explore a variety of practical options for the purposes of information sharing with First Nations.

Specific Claims

In late 2016, the AFN and Canada formed a Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) with a mandate to examine the Specific Claims process and develop joint recommendations for change. The JTWG has been meeting consistently over the past two and half years.





In 2017, the AFN hosted two dialogue sessions with First Nations, one in Ottawa and one in Vancouver. The message that came out of these sessions reflected what First Nations have said consistently over time; Canada's ongoing management and control of the Specific Claims process constitutes a conflict of interest which can only be addressed through independent oversight.

During the fall of 2017, the AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 91/2017, *Support for a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*, calling for the creation of an independent Specific Claims process and support for the work of the JTWG.

In 2018 the AFN advocated for the development of a national engagement process with First Nations on what a fully independent specific claims process might look like. These efforts resulted in an announcement by Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) Minister Carolyn Bennett in May of 2019 at the AFN National Four Policies and Nation Building Forum that her government was committing \$1.5 million in funding to support ongoing Specific Claims policy review, including a national engagement process facilitated by the AFN and the JTWG.

The JTWG is currently developing a national engagement plan and hopes to complete engagement by December, 2019. Following regional engagement the AFN will host a National Forum on Specific Claims Reform to review options for moving forward.

Comprehensive Land Claims and Inherent Right to Self-Government

Canada has committed to develop a joint AFN-Canada working table to discuss ways to address the Comprehensive Land Claims (CLCP) and Inherent Right to Self-Government policies (IRSG).

First Nations have passed several resolutions rejecting the CLCP and IRSG, including AFN Resolution 47/2015, *Develop a Federal Comprehensive Land Claims Policy Based on the Full Recognition of Aboriginal Title* and Resolution 08/2018, *Implementing Canada's Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework and clarifying the role of the AFN*. In addition, there are numerous resolutions calling for the development of a First Nations-led process that can help clarify the Crown's role respecting the implementation of First Nations inherent rights, title and jurisdiction. There are also resolutions that support First Nations self-determination and Nation re-building efforts, and the exploration of new approaches to support First Nations in exercising their inherent rights, title and jurisdiction.

Following First Nations rejection of Canada's Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework through AFN Resolution 67/2018, *Rejection of the Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework and Associated Processes*, Minister Bennett and Prime Minister Trudeau committed to working with the AFN and "Indigenous partners" to replace the CLCP and the IRSG.

In January 2019, Canada proposed a 'joint' AFN-Canada engagement process that would result in new policies by June 2019.





In response, the National Chief wrote Minister Bennett outlining concerns with the proposed approach stating that the AFN could not support their process because it did not allow First Nations to fully participate or approve the outcomes.

At the 2019 AFN National Four Policies and Nation Building Forum, Minister Bennett told First Nations that Canada would not develop new policies in the absence of a First Nations-led process.

The AFN is working with CIRNAC to secure multi-year funding to support a First Nations-led engagement process on Nation Building. This process would facilitate a dialogue at the local, Tribal, regional, and national levels and include discussion to support the development of new approaches to support First Nations in exercising their rights, title and jurisdiction, including the path forward on CLCP and IRSG.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Continue advocacy efforts at all joint working groups and tables to advance the full recognition of Indigenous rights, title and jurisdiction.
- Begin regional specific claims engagement on a fully independent specific claims process beginning in September, 2019.
- Secure funding to support a First Nations-led engagement process on Nation Building.



Languages and Culture Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has been a longstanding advocate for the affirmation and protection of First Nations language rights. Under the National Chief's direction via the *Closing the Gap* document of 2015, strong advocacy led to the federal government's 2016 commitment to develop an Indigenous languages act. The co-development of such an act and the development of an implementation strategy have been the key activities for the Languages and Culture Sector for 2018-2019.

The AFN's joint work on languages has been guided by: Resolution 77/2017, *Support for continued co-development work on the Indigenous Languages Act*; Resolution 01/2015, *Support for the Full Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's Calls to Action*; and Resolution 06/2015, *Revitalization of Indigenous Languages: Concrete Actions to Support Indigenous Language Teachers and Cultural Centres*.

Key goals included ensuring that the Government of Canada affirms language rights as an inherent right, as per Section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, and that the legislation stipulates the provision of adequate, sustainable, and long-term funding to restore fluency in First Nations languages. All First Nations languages are at risk and need relevant interventions.

Bill C-91, *An Act respecting Indigenous languages*, was co-developed with these goals in mind to ensure the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance, and strengthening of Indigenous languages in Canada, and we are proud to say that it achieved royal assent on June 21, 2019.

In June 2019, the AFN expanded the Languages Sector's activities to include culture, becoming the Languages and Culture Sector.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Legislative co-development

The AFN has been actively involved in the co-development of Bill C-91 and advocated for legislative content to be consistent with Resolution 77/2017. The Act has been drafted in such a way that it further commits the Government of Canada to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the TRC Calls to Action 13, 14, and 15. The federal government agreed to take action to implement both of these instruments and the Act strengthens the obligation to fulfil these commitments. The Act also recognizes and affirms Indigenous language rights as stated in Section 35, *Constitution Act, 1982*.

From June-September 2018, the Department of Canadian Heritage held Intensive Engagement Sessions across the country. The aim of these sessions was to receive input on what content to include in legislation. The AFN conducted pre-engagement sessions to support participants prior to these engagements.

The Chiefs' Committee on Languages and the Technical Committee on Languages also provided their expertise to the Co-development Table with regards to legislative content, program guidelines, and the implementation of the Act.





Funding

The AFN has strongly advocated for increases in the funding available to First Nations for language revitalization. Federal Budget 2019 allocated \$334 million over five years for Indigenous languages. Though Budget 2019 demonstrated an increase, the AFN continues to push for additional funding in keeping with the AFN's costing analysis.

2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL)

The AFN has participated in – and supported the development of – IYIL activities in Canada and abroad, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) launch and the United Nations General Assembly's (UNGA) launch of the IYIL.

The AFN has also been advocating for a United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages to support legacy work, as related to the preservation, revitalization, and normalization of Indigenous languages. In December 2018, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 46/2018, *United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages*. The AFN's work in relation to advocacy for an international decade of Indigenous languages, including legacy initiatives, is guided by this resolution.

International Mother Languages Day

The AFN launched a #SpeakYourLanguage campaign with the support from the AFN Regional Offices, which held language classes on International Mother Languages Day. This gave an opportunity for participants to connect with language

speakers and learn the language in the traditional territory where they live and work.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

Bill C-91

- The AFN is working jointly with the Department of Canadian Heritage to address implementation issues as related to Bill C-91, including funding mechanisms and the establishment of the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages, among others.
- The AFN has prepared a Guide to support local and regional initiatives for language revitalization and is planning to disseminate the Guide and related documentation over 2019-20.



Legal Affairs and Justice Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is faced with a variety of requests from First Nations members, ever-changing mandates, and political challenges in the form of federal legislation and programs that impact First Nations. The AFN's Legal Counsel is expected to respond to legislative initiatives with timely, effective and sound responses. The AFN Legal Affairs and Justice Sector consists of six lawyers providing advice on all legal issues arising in the AFN's work. This includes assisting policy sectors in formulating policy options and promoting the implementation of self-determination as recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector provides direct legal support to the Executive Committee and the AFN's various sectors.

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector carries out two essential functions. First, the Sector provides policy advice on matters involving the Canadian justice system, public safety, corrections, border security, *Indian Act* reforms, and gender issues. Secondly, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector supports broader legal change through legal activism and litigation. The provision of legal advice ensures that the organization's activities are conducted in accordance with the AFN Charter, governing policies, and any federal corporation regulations. The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector has been assigned responsibility for monitoring, analyzing, and interpreting federal legislation and regulations. Further, the Sector supports the Executive Committee in providing evidence before Parliamentary Standing Committees on any draft legislation under consideration. Finally, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector directs any litigation that the AFN is involved in.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Legal Activism

The AFN's legal advocacy is most applicable in the context of court litigation, which is usually the last resort when it comes to addressing needed political and policy changes. The AFN is mandated to promote respect for and implementation of First Nations' inherent and Aboriginal rights, Treaty rights and title, as well as support the exercise of fundamental human rights and civil liberties. At times, advocacy encounters bureaucratic barriers that prevent an issue from moving forward. In such cases, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector has engaged in legal processes to seek out positive resolutions on behalf of First Nations.

The AFN's involvement in the child welfare complaint before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal is the most widely recognized example of AFN's legal activism. Starting with the National Policy Review, a joint study between the AFN and Canada back in 2000, the AFN has been advocating for comprehensive changes to the child welfare system. The AFN filed its human rights complaint in 2007, which was affirmed in 2016 and Canada was ordered to cease its discriminatory practices. The AFN and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (Caring Society) initiated several non-compliance motions against Canada during the 2018-19 fiscal year. The litigation resulted in several orders requiring Canada to fund First Nations child prevention and protection programs on a needs-based model with reimbursements on actual costs. Canada has since been working with the AFN and the Caring Society to implement these reforms.





In addition, the AFN regularly intervenes in court cases that will have national impacts on First Nations. During the 2018-19 fiscal year, the AFN intervened in three Constitutional references relating to the federal carbon tax and British Columbia's authority to regulate pipelines, as well as the Ahousaht First Nation's right to a commercial fishery within their traditional waters. The AFN argued that the constitutional authorities exercised by the federal or provincial governments must be constrained by Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The AFN also intervened in the *R. v. Barton* case before the Supreme Court of Canada, arguing that the Court processes routinely discriminate against First Nations women and girls. The Supreme Court of Canada established a new standard in sexual assault cases where the complainant is an Indigenous woman or girl, which requires trial judges to provide express instructions to juries aimed at countering prejudice against Indigenous women and girls.

Protection of Legal Rights and Interests of First Nations - Litigation Activities

In order to advance justice and reconciliation for First Nation individuals, the AFN routinely approaches the courts to seek out innovative remedies to enforce established rights. The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector brings selected cases to the courts to advance First Nations rights, seek out law reforms, and provide legal education to the broader Canadian public. For some First Nations individuals, advancing a legal claim is not possible because of costs, complexity of the legal issues, and/or the pressure associated with advancing a claim against the federal government, which is seen as too large of a task. The AFN's public interest litigation focused on rights empowerment

giving tangible results for individuals and collectives. The AFN is a party to legal proceedings that have a direct impact on individuals. These include the ongoing implementation of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector has been tasked by the Supreme Court of Canada, by way of the Notice Plan, to provide culturally appropriate support to First Nations individuals, across Canada, who made a claim under either the Independent Assessment Process (IAP) or Alternative Dispute Resolution Process (ADR) as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA). As part of these processes, certain records were created which included the Claimants' applications, transcripts of testimony, and the final decision with respect to their claims. The Supreme Court of Canada ultimately ordered the records to be destroyed in September 2027, unless the Claimant provides their express consent to the retention of their records at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation ("NCTR"). The AFN was tasked by the court to disseminate information to Claimants relating to their rights to their records as per the Notice Plan.

As a Party to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector regularly participates in court proceedings that deal with deficiencies in the compensation scheme. The AFN supported an IAP claimant, J.W., whose compensation was denied because adjudicators wrongly required that he prove the motive of his perpetrator. The majority of the Supreme Court of Canada found the inclusion of this requirement was an unauthorized





modification of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, contrary to the intentions of the parties. In supporting judicial intervention, Justice Côté held that this case raised unusual circumstances and involved a “unique dilemma” for which the agreement had no internal recourse. The AFN has requested that Canada review past IAP decisions to determine if other individuals were wrongly denied compensation.

The AFN obtained standing in all parts of the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. This is an area of utmost priority, and the AFN continues to take all avenues to pursue implementation of a National Action Plan to end the violence, disappearance, and murder against Indigenous women and girls. The AFN has taken a “Families First” approach to ensuring that there is a respectful inclusion of voices and perspectives of the families in the discussions. The Inquiry released its Final Report on June 3, 2019. The report contains 4 overarching findings relating to rights recognition, justice, security, health and wellness, and includes *231 Calls for Justice* which include recommendations to governments, including Indigenous governments, institutions, industries, service providers, partners, and to all Canadians. The AFN will advocate for the implementation of the recommendations of the National Inquiry.

Bill S-3 – Indian Act

In 2016, the Quebec Superior Court ruled in *Descheneaux* that the Indian Registration provisions of the Indian Act were unconstitutional. The Court directed Canada to remove all sex-based discrimination from the *Indian Act*. In addition, the Court directed Canada to address all other forms of

discrimination contained within the registration provisions. Bill S-3, *An Act to amend the Indian Act*, was Canada’s response. As a result of the amendments, between 28,000 and 35,000 individuals became eligible for Indian status. The amended legislation also requires the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to initiate consultations on issues related to registration and band membership.

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector provided First Nations with culturally-appropriate, accessible, and independent information on relevant and appropriate reforms to the *Indian Act*. As part of these efforts, the Sector developed a discussion paper on First Nations control over citizenship to address negative impacts that First Nations have encountered, with the purpose of facilitating informed discussions more broadly across Canada. In addition, the Legal Affairs and Justice team researched and created sample citizenship codes for First Nations to use as a precedent. These codes will be available for First Nations to modify and build upon to suit their particular circumstances and governance systems. Moreover, the Legal Affairs and Justice team collected feedback from First Nations participants for further evaluation, assessment, and utilization in developing materials related to the following issues: the implementation of the 1951 cut-off, adoption, second generation cut-off, unknown/unstated paternity, enfranchisement, the federal role for determining status and membership, and finally, First Nations authority to determine membership.

This project involved several activities. First and foremost, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector assisted First Nations by participating and providing legal and political input in





multiple events involving the federal government's Collaborative Consultation Process related to Indian Registration, Band Membership and First Nation Citizenship across Canada. The Sector then created public information documents on how to participate in the Bill S-3 consultation process. Finally, the Sector has been developing fact sheets, newsletters, infographics, and brochures for First Nation governments on a broad range of issues involving policy matters that directly affect First Nations the most.

Intellectual Property Reforms

In 2018, the Government of Canada announced proposed legislative changes to intellectual property laws and the Copyright Board's legislative framework. The rich and vibrant cultural expressions and traditional knowledge of First Nations peoples have not been afforded sufficient protection by Canadian intellectual property laws. First Nations' cultural expressions, medicines, and knowledge of genetic resources are frequently appropriated, reproduced, copied, and adapted by others. The current copyright and intellectual property regime in Canada fosters unauthorized reproduction, adaptation, and commercialization of First Nations' knowledge and innovations with no sharing of benefits, economic or otherwise, with First Nations. In addition, the intellectual property regime in Canada allows the continued manufacturing by third parties of counterfeit First Nations cultural expressions.

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector has been developing guides and background papers for First Nations communities on copyright, trademark, and patents as it relates to the full range of cultural expressions (song,

dance, stories, legends, art, etc.); First Nations designs (baskets, beadwork, clothing, etc.); and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources and medicines. Secondly, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector is in the process of creating technical tools on the trademark, copyright, and patent registration process for First Nations' use.

Policing

The AFN is mandated to advocate for First Nations police services to be identified as an essential service. The First Nations Policing Program (FNPP) needs to expand beyond its current footprint and be available to First Nations seeking to establish their own police agencies. As directed by AFN Resolution 107/2017, *Support for First Nations Chiefs of Police Association Resolution Calling for First Nations Policing to be Entrenched as an Essential Service*, and Resolution 44/2018, *Enhancing and Supporting Tribal Police Services in First Nations in Canada*, the AFN is advocating for enhancement to the FNPP, and for the funding of First Nations police services equitably, when compared to other police agencies. Further, the AFN and Canada signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities in June 2017, which identified policing and community safety issues affecting First Nations as the first joint priority. The AFN and Public Safety Canada (PSC) continue to engage on scoping and defining "policing and community safety" to support the FNPP becoming an essential service, address program gaps, and highlighting best practices to help advance public safety in First Nations.

The AFN completed a gap analysis scoping report in March 2019 that outlines short- and long-term priorities. This report covered



a broad range of concerns that includes the overall bias in the Canadian criminal justice system and the underfunding of First Nations police services. It also incorporated feedback from First Nations police agencies and available research on this subject matter. The AFN is also continuing to engage with the RCMP on developing a strategic response to the issues of racism and discrimination as outlined in the AFN-RCMP Relationship Building Protocol, which was signed on June 12, 2016. Further, the AFN continues to develop a strategic working relationship with the new RCMP Commissioner, Brenda Lucki, to continue to implement initiatives outlined in the Protocol.

Nuclear Waste

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) had provided funding to the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector to host an experts committee on nuclear waste and regulatory processes, as well as support research, policy development, priority identification and engagement on nuclear waste and related issues. Deliverables include the preparation of a reconciliation policy framework, the development of technical tools in relation to the assessment and licensing processes, the development of materials on Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and its application to Adaptive Phase Management (APM), and the creation of a discussion paper on emergencies related to used fuel deep geological repository.

These works are focused on ensuring that the NWMO fully informs potentially affected First Nations communities concerning APM and the search for an acceptable site for the storage of spent nuclear materials in a deep geological repository. These works shall ensure that the NWMO obtains the free,

prior and informed consent (FPIC) of First Nations who could be in proximity to or affected by the installation of a deep geological repository, further to the requirement that FPIC be obtained for the storage of hazardous materials on First Nations lands as per Resolution 48/2017, *Opposition to Nuclear Waste Disposal and Abandonment*.

Cannabis

Non-medical cannabis became legalized in Canada on October 17, 2018. In 2018, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 90/2018, *Support for a Cannabis Working Task Force*, to address jurisdictional issues, which have become more apparent since non-medical cannabis became legal. This resolution focuses on establishing a taxation option for First Nations fuel, alcohol, cannabis, and tobacco (FACT). The resolution has also supported necessary amendments or recommendations to any regulations related to the *Cannabis Act*. The final direction given by the resolution involves developing the necessary First Nations institutional framework to implement a comprehensive First Nations cannabis jurisdiction option. The AFN Legal team has been communicating with the Health, Social Development and Economic Development sectors to make progress on these initiatives.

The AFN hosted a meeting of the Cannabis Task Force on June 8, 2018. Leadership, youth, elders and community representatives attended the meeting. Regional Chief Ghislain Picard and former Regional Chief Isadore Day were the co-chairs. Health Canada's Licensing and Regulation Secretariat contributed to the meeting by having a presentation delivered





by representative Eric Costen. Senator McCallum also provided comments over the phone, which were geared towards protecting First Nations youth. The Task Force planned to meet again in July 2018, to discuss objectives such as developing a standard framework, which could be usable in all regions, producing a discussion paper, and considering how far the Task Force could advocate for First Nations, while respecting their jurisdiction. The July 2018 meeting did not occur and rescheduling plans are pending.

Border Crossing

In response to the Senate's report, *Border Crossing Issues and the Jay Treaty*, the federal government's decision to appoint a Special Representative, and in accordance with Resolution 73/2016, *Explore Practical Solutions for Canada – U.S. Border Crossing by First Nations Citizens*, the AFN Executive struck a Chiefs Committee on Border Crossings. The AFN Executive also appointed Mike Mitchell as the AFN Special Representative on Border Security issues. Mr. Mitchell is mandated to meet with Canadian and US officials to discuss the development of a secured Indigenous identification border access-card.

The AFN Special Representative attended the 2019 Tribal Border Summit in Tucson, Arizona, on January 24–25, 2019. The Summit provided an opportunity for leaders of Indigenous Nations and Tribes, located on or near the international boundaries of Canada, Mexico, and Russia, to discuss border crossing issues and efforts to facilitate the mobility of Indigenous peoples. The AFN Special Representative has also engaged in meetings with representatives from Public Safety Canada, Crown-

Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNA), the United States Department of Homeland Security and the Pasqua Yaqui Tribe in Arizona regarding a possible secured border access-card pilot project.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector will continue to pursue positive changes to legislative, policy and common law principles that reflect reconciliation, and the entrenchment of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector will continue to advocate for changes in the Canadian criminal justice system to eliminate issues such as racism, overcharging First Nations offenders, and inequitable funding for First Nations police services.
- The AFN will continue to pursue legal actions to uphold and implement inherent Aboriginal and Treaty rights and title.
- The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector will produce informational materials, fact sheets, and discussion papers for local First Nations use.





Research and Policy Coordination Sector

National Advocacy

The AFN continues to advance the rights and interests of First Nations through the building of effective working relationships with federal, provincial and territorial governments. Work is ongoing to ensure First Nations inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction are affirmed in policy approaches and objectives which affect First Nations.

The AFN's leadership works to ensure First Nations have access to decision-makers. Prime Minister Trudeau has addressed Chiefs-in-Assembly on four occasions since 2015. In December 2018, the AFN hosted a parliamentary reception to facilitate First Nations access to Parliamentarians and key decision-makers. In order to maintain First Nations access to Parliamentarians and key decision-makers, AFN Assemblies and AFN Executive meetings regularly feature dialogue with senior Cabinet Ministers and Officials.

A key activity the AFN undertakes nationally is federal budget advocacy. The AFN coordinates and submits a federal pre-budget submission, annually, to the Standing Committee on Finance. Through this process, the AFN advocates for sufficient funding to close the socio-economic gaps between First Nations citizens and Canadians.

Significantly, the last four federal budgets have invested an additional \$21.4 billion into First Nations programs and services. This is four times what the Kelowna Accord committed to in 2006. Nonetheless, there is much more work needed to achieve the outcomes First Nations desire and the AFN continues its efforts to influence the Government of Canada's annual budget commitments.

Advocacy on Key Legislative Priorities

The AFN provides timely information to First Nations on the activities of Parliament, including legislative and committee business. To accomplish this, the AFN conducts extensive federal parliamentary monitoring and analysis on matters, which have direct impact on First Nations. Priorities in these areas include, but are not limited to, Indigenous languages revitalization; the justice system; First Nation Veteran's Affairs; First Nations consultation on infrastructure and land development; the well-being of First Nations women, children, and 2SLGBTQQIA individuals; and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In the past year, the AFN made presentations to the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, and the Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, in addition to, written submissions to both the House of Commons and the Senate. Submissions and appearances are available at <http://www.parl.ca/>. In total, since February 2016, the AFN has had representatives speak to the House of Commons at least 32 times on 9 different bills and also speak to the Senate at least 13 times on 7 different bills.

As a result of First Nations advocacy, a number of bills have achieved Royal Assent that seek to improve the lives and affirm the rights of First Nations. Major legislative progress includes:

- Bill C-91, *An Act Respecting Indigenous Languages*;





- Bill C-92, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families*;
- Bill C-48, *An Act respecting the regulation of vessels that transport crude oil or persistent oil to or from ports or marine installations located along British Columbia's north coast*;
- Bill C-55, *An act to amend the Oceans Act and the Canada Petroleum Resources Act*;
- Bill C-69, *An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*;
- Bill C-68, *An Act to amend the Fisheries Act and other Acts in consequence*

The Research and Policy Sector leads the Resolutions Committee, who manages all administrative aspects of the resolutions process, from the time draft resolutions are first submitted until they are finalized and posted on the AFN website. The Sector also oversees the Resolutions Update Report, a document that tracks progress on resolutions passed by Chiefs-in Assembly.

The AFN provides an opportunity to Chiefs-in-Assembly to discuss First Nations' priorities in dialogue and strategy sessions. These sessions seek to advance existing resolutions and create new resolutions that provide direction to the AFN.

Federal Elections Outreach

The AFN has a partnership with Elections Canada to provide information and materials to First Nation electors about when, where, and how to register and vote. The project also focuses on increasing accessibility to polling stations by reaching out to First Nations band administrators, along with Chiefs and Councillors, to provide information on establishing voting locations, and ensuring culturally appropriate electoral services.

Upcoming activities include continued outreach at First Nations events, forums, and meetings throughout the coming months to provide information directly to First Nations. The AFN has also established a Call Centre to ensure info is provided directly to First Nations leadership on how to become involved in the process, such as employment opportunities with Elections Canada, how to set-up a polling station on-reserve, and changes to voter identification requirements due to the recent amendments to the *Elections Modernization Act*.

The AFN advocated in support of these bills including participating in parliamentary proceedings, coordinating a national letter-writing campaign to Senators, and media outreach.

Resolutions

Resolutions are the essential mechanism by which First Nations provide specific mandates and direction to the Assembly of First Nations. The resolutions process serves to effectively foster and capture national consensus on significant policy matters, and are considered at the Annual General Assembly or at the Special Chiefs Assembly.

In the last year, Chiefs-in-Assembly passed 98 Resolutions during three assemblies (the May 2018 Special Chiefs Assembly on Federal Legislation, the Annual General Assembly, and the Special Chiefs Assembly). Action has been taken on all resolutions from this year. Sectors continue to advance resolutions from previous years.





Canada-AFN Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

On January 14, 2019, the National Chief, members of the Executive Committee, and First Nations leadership met with the Prime Minister and key members of Cabinet as part of the AFN-Canada MOU on Joint Priorities. The Prime Minister and the National Chief co-chaired this meeting, the first of three meetings that will take place under the MOU in 2019/2020.

The MOU meeting took place on the day of a federal Cabinet shuffle, giving the National Chief and the Regional Chiefs the opportunity to connect with the newly-appointed Minister of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Seamus O'Regan. The former Minister of ISC, Jane Philpott, also attended the meeting to provide final comments on her files. Minister Rodriguez (Heritage), Minister Carolyn Bennett and Parliamentary Secretaries Karen McCrimmon (Public Safety), Gary Anandasangaree (Heritage) and Joël Lightbound (Finance) also participated.

The National Chief and Regional Chiefs put forward several opportunities to maintain progress and the Prime Minister responded with some key commitments. One commitment is for the AFN and Canada to work toward a National Action Plan for the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration). Such an Action Plan would focus on implementation, which is crucial to fulfilling the principles of the UN Declaration.

Another significant commitment was for the AFN and Canada to initiate new processes to address the problems with Canada's policies

on the Inherent Right to Self-government as well as Comprehensive Claims, and to reinvigorate processes on Specific Claims and Additions to Reserve. It is important that Canada dismantle or change policies based on the termination of First Nations' rights, title and jurisdiction. Proper and effective policies must be based on the recognition of First Nations' rights, title and jurisdiction. This work must be done in partnership and cooperation with First Nations.

Prior to the Cabinet shuffle, Canada announced its Litigation Directive to the Department of Justice counsels to give preference to negotiation over litigation, effective immediately. The government has also committed to covering the costs of intervention under the Default Prevention and Management Policy, removing a burden on First Nations governments' Band Support Funding.

The National Chief and the Prime Minister agreed that progress is being made in many areas, but there is still much work to do to close the gap between First Nations and other Canadians.

Implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

In its final report the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) called on governments, educational and religious institutions, civil society groups and all Canadians to take on the 94 Calls to Action (CTA).

As per Resolution 01/2015, *Support for the Full Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action*, Chiefs-in-Assembly call on federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal





governments to take immediate steps to fully implement all the TRC's Calls to Action. Resolution 01/2015 also mandates the AFN Secretariat to report back to the Chiefs-in-Assembly, by way of a progress report. The AFN's progress report identifies which CTAs that have not been actioned, CTAs where action is proposed, CTAs that are underway, and those that have been completed.

The progress report has identified Calls #25 to #42, which pertain to Justice, as the category with the least amount of movement. The AFN will continue to advocate for the full implementation of all Calls to Action.

Intergovernmental Relations

On May 27, 2019, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Executive Committee passed an executive motion that federal, provincial and territorial governments cease discussion of matters, affecting First Nations, without First Nations rights-holders and delegated representatives being a part of the process.

The AFN has been actively seeking respectful inclusion in all federal-provincial-territorial meetings. There have been continuous attempts to sideline and segregate the AFN from participation in federal-provincial-territorial intergovernmental tables, and limit and marginalize Indigenous involvement.

Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe hosted the 2019 Summer Meeting of Canada's Premiers from July 9 to 11, 2019. Premier Scott Moe and Chief Bruce Morin co-hosted a meeting with the National Chief and provincial and territorial leaders, at the Big River First Nation in Treaty 6 territory, on July 9, 2019. This meeting focused on implementing Bill

C-91, *An Act Respecting Indigenous Languages*; Bill C-92, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families*, infrastructure investments in First Nations communities, and the implementation of the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls For Justice.

The National Chief, with Quebec Regional Chief Ghislain Picard, BC Regional Chief Terry Teegee, Northwest Territories Regional Chief Norman Yakeleya and Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Vice-Chief Morley Watson, attended a First Ministers Meeting (FMM) on Economic Development in Montreal, QC, on December 6, 2018, with the purpose of increasing opportunities for First Nations in the areas of economic development.

National Indigenous Peoples Space

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is working with partners to develop a vision for the future long-term use of the Indigenous Peoples Space, located at 100 Wellington Street and 119 Sparks Street, directly across from the Parliament Buildings, and on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin Nation.

The project has been guided by Resolution 29/2017, which directs the AFN to initiate a process to determine the most effective use of 100 Wellington Street. To action this resolution, the Assembly of First Nations and Algonquin Nation created the All Algonquin Common Table, meeting six times since its creation in 2018, and participated in Canada's Working Group. Together, the AFN and the Algonquin Nation are working to secure the equal participation of the





Algonquin Nation within the Indigenous Peoples Space project.

To achieve project permanency, National Chief Perry Bellegarde successfully advocated for early use of 100 Wellington St., while plans for the development of the facility are under way. The early use of the space will include first floor public exhibition space and second floor meeting space.

In 2019, the Assembly of First Nations will continue working with the Algonquin Nation to ensure a future National Indigenous Peoples Space showcases First Nations cultures and histories, while educating Canadians and visitors on the rights and interests of First Nations.

Fiscal Relations

First Nations have long sought a fiscal relationship with the Government of Canada that respects and supports Inherent and Treaty rights, title and jurisdiction. This is the driver behind the work on a new fiscal relationship between First Nations and Canada.

The Assembly of First Nations National Chief, Perry Bellegarde, and the former Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, Carolyn Bennett, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the AFN's Annual General Assembly in July 2016, to develop options on a new fiscal relationship for the Chiefs-in-Assembly and Canada to consider.

The work under that MOU led to an interim report, presented at the AFN's Special Chiefs Assembly in Ottawa in December 2017, and to Resolution 66/2017, *AFN-Canada Joint Report on Fiscal Relations*, which directed the

AFN to pursue recommendations from the report including:

- the creation of a joint advisory committee;
- development of a 10-year transfer;
- replacement of the Default Prevention and Management Policy (DPMP); and,
- repeal of the First Nations Financial Transparency Act (FNFTA).

Key Activities and Accomplishments

The AFN continues to pursue each of these recommendations as directed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly.

In April of 2019, 85 First Nations began receiving the New Fiscal Relationship (NFR) transfer. The NFR Transfer increases predictability of funding by providing ten years of guaranteed funding, with an annual escalator that matches inflation and population growth. This will help First Nations plan their own futures. It increases flexibility by allowing First Nations to set their own priorities for spending funds, as the terms and conditions in contribution agreements do not apply to the funds provided under the NFR Transfer. This means First Nations governments can decide how much to spend on pressing needs or opportunities. It increases First Nations control by eliminating program terms and conditions, recipient audits and compliance reviews set and conducted by Canada. This is helping to put an end to the role of the modern-day "Indian Agent". It also decreases the reporting burden for the programs included in the NFR Transfer with 92 per cent less data to be provided to Canada, by First Nations, than is currently required under contribution agreements. These incremental changes support the goals of First Nations governments, while transformational





approaches to the relationship are in development.

Progress has been made on developing options to replace the Default Prevention and Management Policy and, in the interim, ISC has committed to cover the cost of co-managers and third party managers, so that First Nations will no longer need to pay for those services with Band Support Funding.

Similarly, a plan is in place to repeal the First Nations Financial Transparency Act, although legislation will not be introduced until the next sitting of Parliament. In the interim, Canada has committed to not enforce the provisions of the FNFTA.

The Joint Advisory Committee on Fiscal Relations also recently submitted its advice to the National Chief and Minister of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) on a long-term vision for the new fiscal relationship. That advice will be the subject of a dialogue session at the Annual General Assembly in July 2019, and, potentially, engagement sessions in the autumn of 2019.

International Advocacy

The Chiefs-in-Assembly have directed the AFN to engage in international activities and mechanisms to advance First Nations rights. The AFN is mandated to pursue an international dimension to its advocacy and activities.

The AFN advances the rights and interests of First Nations internationally by: strategically participating in key international forums and events; forging relationships and partnerships with other Indigenous peoples, their organizations, and human rights

non-governmental organizations (NGOs); facilitating international political, economic, cultural, and social relationships between First Nations and foreign States; and seeking to establish working relationships with Canada towards informing their foreign and international policy approaches and objectives on matters of shared interest.

The AFN had representation at major UN events over the last year. The National Chief attended the United Nations General Assembly Launch Event of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages in New York, NY. The AFN environment sector, along with Regional Chief Adamek, participated in the UN Conference of Parties (COP 24) in Poland, which focused on climate change. The newly established Indigenous Peoples' Platform (IPP) was a central focal point for ongoing Indigenous advocacy. The AFN environmental sector also participated in the UN Conference of the Parties (COP 14) on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in Egypt, where the future of the Working Group on Article 8(j) of the CBD, relating to Indigenous Peoples, remains a focal point for Indigenous advocacy for the post 2020 period.

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The AFN co-hosted an event on April 22, 2019, at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York called, *Achieving the Promise of the International Year of Indigenous Languages – Outcomes, Legacies and Future Work*. This event is part of the annual sessions of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations Grand Chief, Wilton Littlechild, spoke stating





that, "Recognition and support of Indigenous languages is a vital aspect of implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples." Grand Chief Littlechild was honoured by having the Ambassador's board room named after him at the Canadian Mission.

The AFN partnered with the Permanent Missions of Ecuador and Canada, with additional sponsorship by the Missions of Norway and Australia. It featured a keynote address by Her Excellency María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the UN General Assembly, signaling high level support for the event, and for action to strengthen Indigenous languages.

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

On May 29, 2019, the AFN Executive Committee moved to approve support advocating for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to advocate for the Canadian adoption of the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The Chiefs-in-Assembly passed numerous resolutions calling for full and effective implementation of the UN Declaration. In addition, the AFN - Canada Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Joint Priorities, signed June 12, 2017, identifies co-development of a National Action Plan (NAP) on implementation of the UN Declaration as a joint priority. This commitment was reiterated at the AFN-Canada leaders meeting, under the MOU, on January 14, 2019.

The AFN advocated for the passing of Bill C-262, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, a private member's Bill that sought to harmonize Canadian laws with the UN Declaration. The National Chief advocated for the legislation through a presentation to the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs (INAN), contacting Senators and party leaders directly, releasing statements in the media, and supporting the AFN's advocacy campaign. The advocacy campaign included strategic meetings with Regional Chiefs and Senators, and a letter-writing campaign, which resulted in more than 750,000 letters to Senators, asking them to vote in support of Bill C-262.

Despite the organized and coordinated effort of the advocacy campaign, the Bill did not receive Royal Assent. The work of implementation will continue, despite this setback. The AFN is planning to launch a listening exercise to hear how First Nations want the UN Declaration implemented.

The Liberal Party of Canada, Green Party of Canada, and New Democratic Party of Canada have all committed to legislating the implementation of the UN Declaration, should they form government.

Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework

On February 14, 2018, the Prime Minister of Canada announced "that the Government of Canada would develop – in full partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples" – a Recognition and Implementation of Rights Framework (the Framework) and depart from its denial of our rights to a renewal of our relationship making rights





recognition and implementation the basis for all our relations.

On May 1-2, 2018, the AFN convened a Special Chiefs Assembly regarding federal legislation in Gatineau, Quebec. Chiefs-in-Assembly provided direction through Resolution 08/2018, *Implementing Canada's Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework and clarifying the role of the AFN*. This resolution calls on Canada to work with First Nations before any adopting of legislative or administrative measures that may affect First Nations; to repudiate and abandon the inherent rights policy and related practices; provide funding for the First Nations consultation on the Framework and related activities; and rename the Framework to "Protection and Affirmation of Rights and Title Framework".

In July 2018, Chiefs-in-Assembly through Resolution 39, *First Nations Determination of the Path to Decolonization*, directed the AFN to call on Canada to halt the "Recognition and Implementation of Rights" process going forward, and insist that Canada participate in a First Nations-led negotiation. Chiefs-in-Assembly also called for a meeting with First Nations to discuss this issue. National Chief Perry Bellegarde responded by convening a National Policy Forum at the earliest opportunity.

As a policy dialogue, First Nations leadership and their delegated representatives voiced their opinions, concerns, and preferred strategic options for advancing respect and enforcement of First Nations rights at a National Policy Forum called, *Affirming First Nations Rights, Title and Jurisdiction*, which took place on September 11 and 12, 2018, in Gatineau, Quebec.

During the Special Chief's Assembly on December 6, 2018, Chiefs-in-Assembly provided further direction via Resolution 67/2018, *the Rejection of the Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework and Associated Processes*, to hold a forum for establishing First Nations principles to solidify our approach with the Crown.

On May 1 and 2, 2019, the National Chief convened the national policy forum, *A First Nation Led Process: Four Policies and Nation Building*, in Treaty 6 territory in Edmonton, Alberta. The participants had the opportunity to consider the principles outlined in the September 2018 Forum *Affirming First Nations Rights, Title and Jurisdiction* and hear updates on the Specific Claims policy, the Inherent Right policy, the Additions to Reserve policy, and the Comprehensive Claims policy.

During the Forum, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Carolyn Bennett announced that the federal government heard First Nations voices and concerns and stopped their Framework process. Agreeing to a First Nations-led process, the federal government backed away from a deadline in June 2019 for this work, and clearly stated that any new policies will be anchored in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and co-developed with rights-holders.

The Forum keynote speech was delivered by Joseph Kalt, Co-Director of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, at Harvard University. He enriched the "Nation Building" discussion and echoed the delegation in highlighting the "sovereignty" attitude, which requires



efficient institutions that are compatible with First Nations cultures and laws.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- The AFN will continue to monitor and hold the Government of Canada accountable to honour its human rights obligations and the rights and interests of First Nations, internationally.
- Maintain First Nations access to Parliamentarians and key decision-makers.
- Advocate on key legislative priorities to Members of Parliament and Senators.
- Continue to monitor and provide timely information to First Nations on the activities of Parliament, including legislative and committee business.
- Monitor and analyze the platforms of political parties released in the campaign period of the 2019 election.
- Work with the Indigenous partners to identify the preferred vision for 100 Wellington St. and 119 Sparks St. in a manner in which respects Algonquin title and protocols.
- The AFN will continue its annual budget advocacy, pursuing priority investments in addition to the over \$21.4 billion that was identified in the previous four federal budgets.
- First Nations interested in the New Fiscal Relationship transfer have been invited to apply to receive the 10-year agreement beginning on April 1, 2020.
- At the 2019 Annual General Assembly in Fredericton, NB, Chiefs will receive a copy of the report from the Joint Advisory Committee on Fiscal Relations and will be asked to provide direction regarding engagement sessions on how the recommendations in the report might be implemented.
- Work will continue to identify the process for the repeal of the Default Prevention and Management Policy and the *First Nations Financial Transparency Act*. These topics may be included in dialogue sessions concerning the report of the Joint Advisory Committee on Fiscal Relations, depending on direction from the Chiefs.





Social Development Sector

The AFN Social Development Sector seeks to create healthy, safe, and sustainable First Nations through an inclusive, holistic, and culturally-based social development system focused on First Nations control and jurisdiction. Key areas of work include Child and Family Services (CFS), Jordan's Principle, Early Learning and Child Care, Income Assistance, and poverty reduction. The work of the Social Development Sector is driven by a vision of ongoing partnership between First Nations and the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to ensure a continuum of high-quality and culturally-relevant services, and a comprehensive, integrated approach to social development that includes capacity development for First Nations at the community level.

Taken together, recent AFN Resolution 83/2017, *Support for the National First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Policy Framework*, Resolution 53/2018, *Federal Legislation on First Nations Child Welfare Jurisdiction*, and Resolution 27/2018, *Support for the long-term implementation of Jordan's Principle*, capture the overall spirit and mandate of the Social Development Sector's ongoing advocacy efforts. These resolutions call for greater First Nations control and determination over child and family well-being.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

Child Welfare

To support findings of the 2016 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) ruling on inequality in the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) program, a consultation protocol was executed in March 2018 by the Attorney General of Canada, the AFN, the First Nations Child and Family

Caring Society of Canada (Caring Society), Chiefs of Ontario, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation and the Canadian Human Rights Commission. This established the Consultation Committee on Child Welfare (CCCW). The CCCW met several times in 2018 and provided significant input into new program Terms & Conditions for First Nations CFS programs, revising the National Recipient Guide, and the review of Jordan's Principle policy and procedures.

The National Advisory Committee on Child Welfare (NAC) was reinstated in 2016 to inform recommendations for medium and long-term relief related to the CHRT decision, and to provide general advice on program reform, including the implementation of Jordan's Principle. The NAC is a joint committee of First Nations CFS experts, the AFN, the Caring Society, and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). The NAC continues to meet on a regular basis to provide ongoing advice to First Nations CFS reform efforts.

The AFN and the Caring Society requested that the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD), at the University of Ottawa, produce a response to the CHRT orders 408, 418, and 432 related to Canada's discriminatory funding for FNCFS agencies. The NAC provided significant oversight to the preparation of the report by IFSD, *Enabling First Nation Children to Thrive*. The report was released in December 2018, and highlighted FNCFS agency funding shortfalls in prevention, capital, and information technology, as well as contextual and funding structure challenges that must be addressed to change outcomes for children, their families, and their communities.





In January 2018, former ISC Minister Jane Philpott called the state of child welfare for Indigenous children a humanitarian crisis. To address this, ISC released six points of action, including one that calls on Canada to establish federal Indigenous Child Welfare legislation, co-developed with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners. To support the co-development process, the Legislative Working Group (LWG) was established by AFN Resolution 11/2018, *Federal Legislation on First Nations Child Welfare Jurisdiction*. The LWG is comprised of First Nations leadership and child welfare experts as appointed by the AFN Executive and three members of the NAC. The LWG was mandated to assess and recommend options for legislation, regulatory and/or other instruments on First Nations child welfare, consistent with the orders of the CHRT. The LWG met over 20 times and provided input to ISC officials regarding Bill C-92, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*. In February 2019, ISC Minister Seamus O'Regan introduced Bill C-92 in the House of Commons. Bill C-92 is intended to provide jurisdiction of child and family services to First Nations. Now that the Bill received Royal Assent, there will be significant implementation and transition planning work to do, in collaboration with the AFN and First Nations partners.

Jordan's Principle

As called for by AFN Resolution 27/2018, *Support for the long-term implementation of Jordan's Principle*, the Social Development Sector worked with the Jordan's Principle Action Table to develop policy options for supporting greater First Nations control over Jordan's Principle, as part of the long-term approach to implementing Jordan's Principle. The policy options created at the Action

Table informed a fall 2018 Memorandum to Cabinet. While the Federal Budget 2019 did not support the innovative policy options created at the Action Table, due to data gaps and outstanding issues before the CHRT, there was a significant boost to Jordan's Principle including \$1.2 billion over three years, which ensures essential services provided to First Nations children and families continue to be provided.

Per 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*, and AFN Resolution 40/2017, *Call on Canada to Comply with the 2016 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Orders*, the Social Development Sector has provided to Canada First Nations' vision and guidance on the CHRT orders on Jordan's Principle. Their viewpoint was expressed through engagement at the Jordan's Principle Operations Committee, the Jordan's Principle Action Table, the CCCW, and the regular bi-lateral engagement with federal departments.

On September 12–13, 2018, the Social Development Sector coordinated the first-ever national AFN Jordan's Principle Summit, on Treaty One Territory in Winnipeg, MB. Nearly 1,000 participants, including First Nations families, leaders, service coordinators, health directors, technicians, practitioners, service providers and innovators gathered under the theme of *Sharing, Learning, and Growing: Imagining the Future of Jordan's Principle*. The Summit objectives were to make space for those who have experience in accessing, coordinating, and implementing Jordan's Principle to share their insight, lessons learned, and best practices. The Summit was also an





opportunity to learn about the history and legacy of Jordan River Anderson and Jordan's Principle, their meaning for First Nations families, and about First Nations children's rights under the CHRT rulings. Lastly, the Summit made space for First Nations to discuss the long-term approach to Jordan's Principle, as a legal principle that will continue to exist and enable First Nations children and families to thrive.

The Social Development Sector also created a *Jordan's Principle Handbook* for First Nations families and communities to increase knowledge of Jordan's Principle coverage and processes. The *Jordan's Principle Handbook* was widely disseminated across all First Nations, with over 75,000 copies being distributed.

Early Learning and Child Care

In September 2018, the National Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (NIELCC) Framework was announced, culminating a two-year engagement process led by the AFN National Expert Working Group on ELCC (NEWG). Per AFN Resolution 39/2016, *First Nations National Working Group on Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC)*, the NEWG conducted national engagement and drafted a First Nations ELCC Framework, which AFN Resolution 83/2017, *Support for the National First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Policy Framework*, supported as the First Nations submission to the NIELCC Framework. The NIELCC Framework is distinctions-based, articulating the vision, goals, principles and values for a First Nations ELCC system, and supporting First Nations' right to determine what is best for their children.

In 2018, Canada invested \$1.02 billion in First Nations ELCC over 10 years, with First Nations determining how funds are to be spent. The AFN and NEWG developed an interim formula to divide funds across the regions, which was endorsed by AFN Resolution 59/2018, *First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Regional Funding Allocation Approach*. From the Resolution, the NEWG formed a sub-working group to develop a new funding formula and continues to support implementation of the NIELCC and First Nations ELCC Frameworks. The AFN continues to advocate for adequate funding for ELCC, and for partnerships between all levels of government to best support First Nations children and families.

Income Assistance

The AFN Technical Working Group on Social Development (TWGSD) was mandated by AFN Resolution 28/2018, *Support for the establishment of a Technical Working Group on Social Development*, to advise ISC on the social development program and service reform.

The AFN worked with the TWGSD to develop terms-of-reference to guide the TWGSD's work going forward. The TWGSD has been reviewing social programs, and has supported and informed the review, engagement process, and reformation of the On-Reserve Income Assistance Program and its data collection Instrument.

The AFN hosted the second National Forum on First Nations Income Assistance in the Enoch Cree Nation, AB, on March 6–7, 2019. This National Forum brought together over 220 participants, including First Nations leadership, Income Assistance organizations, and former clients to discuss common





challenges in the Income Assistance Program and empower delegates with new knowledge regarding innovative case management strategies and best practices. The Social Development Sector continues to advocate for improved income assistance programs for First Nations, acknowledge the innovation within First Nations, and urge for closing of gaps created by inequitable programs.

Poverty Reduction Strategy

In August 2018, Canada launched *Opportunity for All: Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy*, including the first-ever national poverty measure with concrete targets for reduction. Proposed Bill C-87, *An Act respecting the reduction of poverty, is intended to support Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS)*; however, this Act has not moved past second reading in the House of Commons. At the December 2018 Special Chiefs Assembly, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 47/2018, *First Nations Oversight of Canada's National Poverty Reduction Strategy*. Due to this resolution, the AFN has advocated for a First Nations representative on the National Advisory Council on Poverty to ensure that First Nations realities and experiences with poverty are properly reflected in the implementation process. The AFN has further advocated for a First Nations-led development of poverty indicators specific to First Nations, and securing an internal commitment from Economic and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to continue this conversation with the AFN, the TWGSD, and First Nations. The AFN had previously conducted a review of ongoing engagements for concepts, definitions, measures and implications of poverty, which were submitted for consideration in the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Sports and Lacrosse

At the 2018 Annual General Assembly, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed AFN Resolution 19/2018, *Support for the establishment of an Indigenous Lacrosse Association (ILA)*. Pursuant to this resolution, the AFN sent letters of support for the establishment of an ILA to the Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, numerous Indigenous sports organizations, and provincial and territorial lacrosse associations. The AFN also continued work on AFN Resolution 82/2017, *Support the Inclusion of Lacrosse as a Sport in the Canada Summer Games*, through correspondence with the Honourable Kirsty Duncan. The Minister confirmed in written correspondence on June 5, 2018, that government officials will support the Aboriginal Sport Circle in developing a proposal to this end for consideration by federal, provincial and territorial governments, and other key stakeholders.

Next Steps – Moving Forward

- Continue to work with the NAC and the CCCW to ensure full implementation of all CHRT orders to reform the on-reserve Child and Family Services Program and Jordan's Principle. This will include participation and oversight of further research by the IFSD in building a new funding approach for the FNCFS program.
- Support transition and implementation planning activities of Bill C-92, now that it has received Royal Assent.
- Continue to support the Jordan's Principle Action Table to inform a First Nations vision for the short and long-term implementation of Jordan's





Principle, as well as working to improve communication and knowledge of Jordan's Principle.

- Continue to support the NEWG and regional implementation of the NIELCC and First Nations ELCC Frameworks. Further advocacy for adequate funding and improved partnerships between all ELCC stakeholders to ensure First Nations children have the best start in life.
- Continue to support the TWGSD to advance its priorities and mandate, including review of the Assisted Living Program and the Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples Program, and hosting the next National Forum on First Nations Income Assistance, to be held in early 2020.
- Work to ensure First Nations voices and solutions are heard on poverty in their nations, and collaborate with the ESDC, the TWGSD, and First Nations to examine how to co-develop First Nations-specific indicators of poverty. Continue to advocate to the ESDC to appoint a First Nations representative to the National Advisory Council on Poverty, as mandated by AFN Resolution 47/2018, *First Nations Oversight of Canada's National Poverty Reduction Strategy*.

- Continuing to push for the development of an Indigenous Lacrosse Association and the inclusion of lacrosse in the Canada Summer Games by maintaining correspondence with key Ministers, organizations, and individuals.





**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF THE
NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD**

March 31, 2019



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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, 2019, 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, 2019, 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.

Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

July __, 2019



National Indian Brotherhood

Statement of operations

Year ended March 31, 2019

	Schedules	2019 \$	2018 \$
Revenue			
Indigenous Services Canada	A	26,892,080	23,203,552
Health Canada	B	5,118,501	3,012,773
Canadian Heritage	B	1,700,000	—
Employment and Social Development Canada	B	1,258,010	1,060,330
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	B	947,547	730,405
Environment and Climate Change Canada	B	855,000	316,465
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency	B	500,000	500,000
Public Health Agency of Canada	B	453,702	—
Public Safety Canada	B	395,606	197,125
Privy Council Office	B	249,572	—
Parks Canada	B	189,135	150,000
Transport Canada	B	75,197	—
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	B	72,175	435,141
Natural Resources Canada	B	70,000	119,827
University of Ottawa	B	51,298	46,951
Status of Women Canada	B	36,898	—
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	B	—	154,221
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation	B	—	120,010
Other departments	B	3,020,785	2,030,235
		41,885,506	32,077,035
Expenses			
Advertising, promotion and publications		198,680	93,068
Amortization of capital assets		110,452	99,400
Insurance		27,418	27,675
Miscellaneous		21,517	10,379
Office expenses		1,167,487	1,122,490
Professional fees		9,568,063	5,009,233
Regional service delivery		3,426,142	3,070,078
Rent		1,207,926	1,022,029
Salaries and benefits		13,576,993	11,157,744
Travel and meetings		11,190,478	9,698,232
		40,495,156	31,310,328
Excess of revenue over expenses		1,390,350	766,707

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, 2019

	Notes	2019 \$	2018 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash		12,256,703	4,476,552
Asset held in trust	3	15,281	15,281
Grants and contributions receivable	4	3,684,609	1,884,020
Other accounts receivable		190,925	247,672
Due from Trust Fund		85,859	57,880
Sales tax recoverable		615,516	652,935
Inventory		185,508	182,526
Prepaid expenses		464,146	143,087
		17,498,547	7,659,953
Prepaid expenses		232,171	305,488
Capital assets	5	247,628	293,354
		17,978,346	8,258,795
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		7,584,005	6,068,054
Government remittances payable		119,353	169,030
Liability held in trust	3	15,281	15,281
Deferred contributions	6	7,925,406	1,028,542
Excess contributions	7	823,658	761,595
Current portion of long-term debt	8	80,000	96,000
		16,547,703	8,138,502
Long-term debt	8	—	80,000
		16,547,703	8,218,502
Contingencies and commitments	9 and 10		
Net assets (deficiency)			
Invested in capital assets		247,628	293,354
Internally restricted		1,100,000	—
Unrestricted (deficiency)		83,015	(253,061)
		1,430,643	40,293
		17,978,346	8,258,795

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, 2019

	Invested in capital assets	Internally restricted	Unrestricted general operations	2019 Total	2018 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Net assets (deficit), beginning of year	293,354	—	(253,061)	40,293	(726,414)
Excess of revenue over expenses	—	—	1,390,350	1,390,350	766,707
Internal transfer	—	1,100,000	(1,100,000)	—	—
Acquisition of capital assets	64,726	—	(64,726)	—	—
Amortization of capital assets	(110,452)	—	110,452	—	—
Net assets, end of year	247,628	1,100,000	83,015	1,430,643	40,293

Note

16

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, 2019

	Notes	2019 \$	2018 \$
Operating activities			
Excess of revenue over expenses		1,390,350	766,707
Items not affecting cash			
Amortization of capital assets		110,452	99,400
Increase in deferred contributions		6,896,864	533,121
Increase in excess contributions		62,063	743,873
		8,459,729	2,143,101
Changes in non-cash operating working capital items	11	(490,873)	1,643,007
		7,968,856	3,786,108
Investing activities			
(Increase) decrease in due from Trust Fund		(27,979)	32,755
Acquisition of capital assets		(64,726)	(77,989)
		(92,705)	(45,234)
Financing activities			
Repayment of long-term debt		(96,000)	(96,000)
Net increase in cash		7,780,151	3,644,874
Cash, beginning of year		4,476,552	831,678
Cash, end of year		12,256,703	4,476,552

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



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.



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 \$15,281 (\$15,281 in 2018) for Kelly Morrisseau's children. These funds were donated by individuals and organizations.



National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2019

4. Grants and contributions receivable

Grants and contributions receivable are as follows:

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	154,218	154,221
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency	236,038	500,000
Employment and Social Development Canada	856,114	222,280
Environment and Climate Change Canada	301,000	218,541
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	487,722	339,079
Health Canada	—	12,259
Heritage Canada	85,000	—
Indigenous Services Canada	480,700	437,640
Natural Resources Canada	70,000	—
Privy Council Office	253,575	—
Public Health Agency of Canada	274,569	—
Public Safety Canada	390,476	—
Transport Canada	75,197	—
University of Ottawa	20,000	—
	3,684,609	1,884,020

5. Capital assets

	Cost \$	Accumulated amortization \$	2019 Net book value \$	2018 Net book value \$
Computer equipment	137,770	81,856	55,914	54,827
Office equipment	245,650	161,495	84,155	125,557
Leasehold improvements	232,415	124,856	107,559	112,970
	615,835	368,207	247,628	293,354

6. Deferred contributions

Changes in the deferred contributions balance are as follows:

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Balance, beginning of year	1,028,542	495,421
Contributions received during the year	48,782,371	32,610,156
Contributions recognized as revenue during the year	(41,885,507)	(32,077,035)
Balance, end of year	7,925,406	1,028,542



National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2019

6. Deferred contributions (continued)

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

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Indigenous Services Canada	6,268,020	98,144
Health Canada	667,212	923,172
Registration fees – forums/assemblies	347,591	1,932
Court Order – Government of Canada	294,823	—
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	135,450	—
Status of Women Canada	123,102	—
Elections Canada	89,208	—
University of Ottawa	—	5,294
	7,925,406	1,028,542

7. Excess contributions

Excess contributions are as follows:

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Indigenous Services Canada	768,102	706,039
Public Safety Canada	55,556	55,556
	823,658	761,595

8. Long-term debt

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Term instalment loan, maturing January 2020, payable by 5 consecutive monthly payments of \$80,000 followed by 75 consecutive monthly instalments of \$8,000 for capital bearing interest at prime plus 1%	80,000	176,000
Current portion	80,000	96,000
	—	80,000

Under the terms of the term instalment loan, the Corporation must satisfy certain restrictive covenants related to the Corporation's business functions. As at March 31, 2019, the Corporation was in compliance with these covenants.

Principal payment required until maturity is as follows:

2020	\$ 80,000
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8. Long-term debt (continued)

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 term loan and the credit facility are secured by a general security agreement representing a first charge over all of the Corporation's assets. The balance outstanding at year-end is nil (nil in 2018).

9. 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.

10. Commitments

The Corporation is committed to future minimum lease payments under operating leases for office space and equipment maturing in 2024, for which minimum annual payments for each year are as follows:

	\$
2020	1,469,111
2021	1,414,938
2022	1,390,242
2023	1,336,233
2024	<u>222,634</u>
	<u>5,833,158</u>



National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2019

11. Changes in non-cash operating working capital items

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Grants and contributions receivable	(1,800,589)	(482,875)
Other accounts receivable	56,747	202,468
Sales tax recoverable	37,419	218,310
Inventory	(2,982)	(66,125)
Prepaid expenses	(247,742)	110,327
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,515,951	1,617,827
Government remittances payable	(49,677)	43,077
	(490,873)	1,643,009

12. Controlled entity

The Corporation appoints the trustees of the 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 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

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Assets	205,054,831	146,002,967
Liabilities	1,463,867	1,369,076
Fund balances	203,590,964	144,633,891
	205,054,831	146,002,967

Summarized statement of operations

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Revenue	70,418,188	5,041,353
Expenses	11,461,115	11,057,984
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	58,957,073	(6,016,631)



12. Controlled entity (continued)

Summarized statement of cash flows

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Operating activities	58,866,481	(4,517,497)
Investing activities	(58,933,223)	4,262,859
Net decrease in cash	(66,742)	(254,638)
Cash, beginning of year	414,408	669,046
Cash, end of year	347,666	414,408

As at March 31, 2019, the balance due from the Trust Fund was \$82,959 (\$57,880 in 2018).

For the year ended March 31, 2019, the Corporation received \$60,000 (\$60,000 in 2018) from the Trust Fund for services relating to the administration and management of the Trust Fund and \$48,117 for the rental of office space (\$48,117 in 2018).

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.

13. 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.

14. Pension plan

The Corporation contributes to a defined contribution pension plan for its employees and Regional Chiefs. Contributions are up to 8% of an employee's salary. The employer's contributions for the year were \$685,236 (\$573,305 in 2018).

15. Financial instruments

Fair value

The fair value of the long-term debt is determined using the present value of future cash flows under current financing agreements, based on the Corporation's current estimated borrowing rate for loans with similar terms and conditions. The fair value of the long-term debt as at March 31, 2019 and March 31, 2018, approximates its carrying value. Due to its short term maturity, the fair value of the other financial instruments approximates its carrying value.

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.



15. Financial instruments (continued)

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.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the adverse consequences of interest rate changes on the Corporation's cash flows, financial position and interest expenses.

The Corporation's cash and long-term debt and demand credit facility are exposed to interest rate changes. The long-term debt generally bears interest at fixed rates. Consequently, the cash flow exposure is not significant.

However, the fair value of loans having fixed rates of interest could fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The interest-bearing demand credit facility has a limited exposure to interest rate risk due to its short-term maturity. The impact of adverse changes in rates is not considered material.

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, 2019, an amount of \$1,100,000 was internally restricted (\$nil in 2018) for the above mention purposes.



National Indian Brotherhood
Supporting schedules
 Year ended March 31, 2019

Schedule A - Indigenous Services Canada

	Basic Organizational Capacity	Additions to Reserve	Building a Vision for an Indigenous Peoples House	First Nations Auditor General (Scope of Work)	Core Process on Indian Like	Collaborative Registration	Specific Claims Joint Technical Committee	AFN/CIRC Policy Tables FY18-19	Social Development Work Plan
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue									
Contributions/grants	5,545,726	200,000	300,491	23,153	3,500,000	449,690	500,000	29,045	1,027,901
Contributions/grants – prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	5,545,726	200,000	300,491	23,153	3,500,000	449,690	500,000	29,045	1,027,901
Expenses									
Advertising, promotion and publications	17,394	1,560	33	—	17,469	140	—	—	4,227
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	—	41,428	—	—	50,829	—	—	—
Insurance	5,109	46	—	—	2,235	25	617	—	1,115
Miscellaneous	627	—	—	—	3,800	—	—	—	529
Office expenses	267,855	8,221	—	—	122,473	23,621	—	—	68,427
Professional fees	52,373	2,204	129,061	23,153	834,992	27,556	85	6,036	97,623
Regional service delivery	1,577,267	—	—	—	219,081	—	63,419	—	—
Rent	237,412	3,116	—	—	93,766	17,145	—	—	59,226
Salaries and benefits	3,075,993	106,856	81,994	—	759,656	284,797	279,482	20,000	493,593
Travel and meetings	312,911	77,997	48,217	—	1,447,470	45,577	125,879	3,009	303,163
	5,546,941	200,000	300,733	23,153	3,500,942	449,690	500,213	29,045	1,027,903
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(1,215)	—	(242)	—	(942)	—	(213)	—	(2)





National Indian Brotherhood

Supporting schedules

Year ended March 31, 2019

Schedule A - Indigenous Services Canada (continued)

	Indigenous Summer Work Experience Project	Analyzing FNCFS Agency Needs Project	Child Welfare Legislation Working Group Funding Proposal	FN Trade and Economic Policy and Programs to Support FN	AFN Emergency Services Project	AFN Support of FN Presenters for the 2018 CRHN Symposium	O&M, Housing and Infrastructure Project	FN Education Management and Capacity Development
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue	18,407	1,923,219	381,619	319,490	250,000	8,316	4,650,531	2,476,942
Contributions/grants	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Contributions/grants – prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	18,407	1,923,219	381,619	319,490	250,000	8,316	4,650,531	2,476,942
Expenses								
Advertising, promotion and publication	—	—	—	1,756	4	—	20,357	5,743
Allocation of administrative expenses	1,673	37,710	31,551	—	38,257	831	—	—
Insurance	—	—	—	207	293	—	1,017	1,699
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	200	710
Office expenses	—	—	2,189	13,172	52	—	82,465	108,062
Professional fees	—	1,885,509	221,250	49,925	—	—	993,000	297,368
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,230,098	—
Rent	—	—	—	21,648	14,447	—	54,949	103,828
Salaries and benefits	16,734	—	—	204,864	168,933	—	869,876	1,111,107
Travel and meetings	—	—	126,629	27,918	28,081	7,485	1,398,576	848,595
	18,407	1,923,219	381,619	319,490	250,067	8,316	4,650,538	2,477,112
Deficiency of revenue over expense:	—	—	—	—	(67)	—	(7)	(170)

**National Indian Brotherhood
Supporting schedules**

Year ended March 31, 2019

Schedule A - Indigenous Services Canada (continued)

	AFN Capacity for Engagement in the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change	Implementing the AFN-Canada MOU on Joint Priorities	NRCAN Support Review Env. and Reg. Processes	National Forum on Income Assistance Project	2019 Total	2018 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue						
Contributions/grants	2,197,104	2,465,560	20,000	506,742	26,793,936	23,203,552
Contributions/grants – prior years	—	98,144	—	—	98,144	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2,197,104	2,563,704	20,000	506,742	26,892,080	23,203,552
Expenses						
Advertising, promotion and publications	4,857	10,268	—	1,935	85,743	38,591
Allocation of administrative expenses	236,618	—	1,818	9,009	449,724	393,207
Insurance	1,238	1,486	—	—	15,087	17,222
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	5,866	820
Office expenses	37,772	120,468	—	32,554	893,452	963,780
Professional fees	1,085,660	794,811	—	16,539	6,576,943	3,572,538
Regional service delivery	—	—	2,500	—	3,026,446	3,023,699
Rent	41,362	108,659	1,315	—	787,604	761,937
Salaries and benefits	254,975	996,245	14,367	67,251	8,806,723	7,781,173
Travel and meetings	534,622	531,767	—	379,454	6,247,350	6,656,327
	2,197,104	2,563,704	20,000	506,742	26,894,938	23,209,294
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	—	—	—	—	(2,858)	(5,742)





National Indian Brotherhood
Supporting schedules
 Year ended March 31, 2019

Schedule B – Other funding agencies

	Health Canada	Canadian Heritage	Employment and Social Development Canada	Fisheries and Oceans Canada – AAROM	Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Oceans Management	Environment and Climate Change Canada – First Nations Species at Risk Advisory Committee	Environment and Climate Change Canada – Biodiversity Wildlife and Habitat
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue							
Contributions/grants	4,279,330	1,700,000	1,258,010	758,008	189,539	290,000	140,000
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	839,171	—	—	—	—	—	—
Contributions/grants – prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	5,118,501	1,700,000	1,258,010	758,008	189,539	290,000	140,000
Expenses							
Advertising, promotion and publications	5,265	5,273	2,082	2,076	5	937	1
Allocation of administrative expenses	431,310	154,545	4,875	29,220	8,977	1,157	25,000
Amortization of capital assets	11,772	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	2,401	877	908	977	2	246	—
Miscellaneous	307	41	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	101,152	37,771	42,284	23,335	5,516	10,651	19
Professional fees	1,201,220	424,937	169,929	85,015	22,609	8,008	7,828
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rent	135,854	48,356	37,046	47,437	15,500	13,650	—
Salaries and benefits	1,749,191	465,012	443,772	364,897	69,876	117,099	72,077
Travel and meetings	1,481,578	563,659	558,044	205,059	67,054	138,521	35,267
	5,120,050	1,700,471	1,258,940	758,016	189,539	290,269	140,192
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(1,549)	(471)	(930)	(8)	—	(269)	(192)

National Indian Brotherhood
Supporting schedules
Year ended March 31, 2019

Schedule B – Other funding agencies (continued)

	Environment and Climate Change Canada – Elders Council Indigenous Knowledge System	Environment and Climate Change Canada – Participation in the National Steering Committee	Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency – Review of Environmental Assessment Processes	Public Health Agency of Canada	Public Safety Canada – Permanent Bilateral Mechanism Policing and Community Safety Priority	Public Safety Canada – Creating Awareness for First Nations Emergency Management
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue						
Contributions/grants	200,000	225,000	500,000	453,702	200,000	195,606
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—
Contributions/grants – prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
	200,000	225,000	500,000	453,702	200,000	195,606
Expenses						
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	1,546	359	—	—	200
Allocation of administrative expenses	18,182	20,455	45,454	10,000	26,087	17,906
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	—	82	321	—	—	113
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	699	3,211	4,013	—	549	3,509
Professional fees	104,844	42,255	137,604	—	—	3,363
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	443,702	—	—
Rent	1,300	3,341	24,960	—	—	14,450
Salaries and benefits	49,825	86,840	150,395	—	—	71,750
Travel and meetings	25,874	68,088	137,313	—	173,372	85,241
	200,724	225,818	500,419	453,702	200,008	196,532
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(724)	(818)	(419)	—	(8)	(926)





National Indian Brotherhood
Supporting schedules
 Year ended March 31, 2019

Schedule B – Other funding agencies (continued)

	Privy Council Office	Parks Canada	Transport Canada	Nuclear Waste Management Organization – Foster Positive Dialogue	Natural Resources Canada	University of Ottawa – First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study	Status of Women Canada	Other	2019 Total	2018 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue										
Contributions/grants	249,572	189,135	75,197	72,175	70,000	46,004	36,898	81,182	11,209,358	6,262,698
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,516,143	1,516,143	999,445
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,023,751	1,023,751	903,754
Contributions/grants – prior years	—	—	—	—	—	5,294	—	26,995	871,460	460,280
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	372,714	372,714	247,306
	249,572	189,135	75,197	72,175	70,000	51,298	36,898	3,020,785	14,993,426	8,873,483
Expenses										
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	237	94	466	16	165	16	94,199	112,937	54,477
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	8,159	6,836	3,311	—	2,365	4,547	(1,268,110)	(449,724)	(393,207)
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	98,680	110,452	99,400
Insurance	—	93	—	94	3	20	—	6,194	12,331	10,453
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15,303	15,651	9,559
Office expenses	1,426	8,161	2,468	5,179	3,219	12,065	202	8,606	274,035	158,710
Professional fees	—	22,501	17,499	2,577	11,412	797	—	728,722	2,991,120	1,436,695
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	(44,006)	399,696	46,379
Rent	—	12,034	—	9,536	5,539	797	—	50,522	420,322	260,092
Salaries and benefits	25,974	91,720	22,083	46,324	16,628	18,014	29,377	706,044	4,770,270	3,376,571
Travel and meetings	23,377	46,259	26,217	4,688	33,276	17,369	2,756	1,423,488	4,943,128	3,041,905
	50,777	189,164	75,197	72,175	70,093	51,592	36,898	1,819,642	13,600,218	8,101,034
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	198,795	(29)	—	—	(93)	(294)	—	1,201,143	1,393,208	772,449



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