SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 4, 5 & 6, 2012,GATINEAU, QC

Resolution no. 77/2012

TITLE:	Urgent Call for Health Canada to Address the Cancer Cluster at the Northlands Denesuline First Nation, Lac Brochet, Manitoba
SUBJECT:	Health
MOVED BY:	Chris Henderson, proxy, Barren Lands First Nation, MB
SECONDED BY:	Chief Ron Evans, Norway House Cree First Nation, MB
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

A. The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states, at Article 21, that Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.

B. The Northlands Denesuline First Nation reports that there are unusually high rates of various forms of cancer amongst its 1,023 First Nation citizens, as compared to the rate of incidence of these cancers amongst the general population of Manitoba or of Canada.

C. It has been documented and widely reported that the Northlands Denesuline First Nation has one of the highest rates of tuberculosis infection in the world and in Canada, for example as chronicled in the *Winnipeg Free Press* special feature entitled “The Forgotten Disease”.

D. The ancestral lands and the traditional territories of the Northlands Denesuline First Nation are known by mineral exploration interests and the Mines Branch of the province of Manitoba to host high-grade deposits of uranium, as well as to contain thorium and other radioactive materials.

E. One third of the global supply of uranium is sourced from the Athabasca uranium deposits in Saskatchewan, which are nearby to the west of Lac Brochet and are partially located within the watershed of Wollaston Lake and the Cochrane River, which discharges through Lac Brochet.

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F. Health Canada has repeatedly failed to act upon the persistent requests of the Northlands Denesuline First Nation to initiate a study into and an investigation of the cancer cluster in Lac Brochet, Manitoba.

G. Health Canada has not responded to the requests of the Northlands Denesuline First Nation to investigate the possible relationship between known and suspected high background levels of radioactive materials, including air-borne radon gas and water-borne uranium, and the incidence and rate of cancers and tuberculosis.

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

1. Direct the National Chief to call on the Minister of Health, in collaboration with the Northlands Denesuline First Nation, to immediately initiate a comprehensive study of and an investigation into the cancer cluster in the community, which shall include an examination of the possible relationship between known and suspected high background levels of radioactive materials, including air-borne radon gas and water-borne uranium, and the incidence and rate of cancers and tuberculosis.

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