
Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
December 6,7,8, 2022, Ottawa, ON

Resolution no. 37/2022

TITLE: Support for a First Peoples Monument on the Grounds of Parliament

SUBJECT: Culture

MOVED BY: Kúkpi7 Judy Wilson, Neskonlith Indian Band, BC

SECONDED BY: Chief Roberta Joseph, Trondëk Hwëch'in, YT

DECISION Carried by consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:
- i. Article 7 (2): Indigenous peoples have the collective right to live in freedom, peace and security as distinct peoples and shall not be subjected to any act of genocide or any other violence, including forcibly removing children of the group to another group.
 - ii. Article 8 (2a): States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for any action which has the aim or effect of depriving them of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities.
- B. With the arrival of European traders, missionaries, settlers, and the creation of Canada, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis (First Peoples) across Canada have endured racism and oppressive colonial attitudes from the British and Canadian governments, Roman Catholic and Anglican churches, and businesses. This resulted in negative dealings and grievances with all layers of Canadian society, including but not limited to:
- i. The elimination of the Beothuk People from Newfoundland who had bounties put on their heads and were hunted by British colonizers until their last member, Shanawdithit, a Beothuk woman, died of tuberculosis in 1829;
 - ii. The British Government placed scalp bounties on the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia;

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- iii. The forced relocation of Quebec Inuit to the High Arctic and the Sayisi Dene to Churchill, Manitoba;
 - iv. The burning of Métis homes in Madeline, Manitoba and the starvation of the Plains People;
 - v. The disappearance of many First Nations communities in Manitoba and Alberta;
 - vi. The removal of the people and theft of land from Papaschase First Nation from their reserve in Edmonton, Alberta;
 - vii. The outlawing of the Potlatch ceremony in British Columbia;
 - viii. The hanging of six Chilcotin Chiefs in central British Columbia;
 - ix. The forced removal of the Blondin family and their relatives from the Norman Wells oilfield in central Northwest Territories;
 - x. Mercury poisoning of the Ojibway at Grassy Narrows in Ontario;
 - xi. The establishment and operation of the Residential School System and the carrying out of the 60's Scoop;
 - xii. The mistreatment of World War I and World War II veterans when they returned home;
 - xiii. The building of Indian hospitals where medical experiments were performed; and,
 - xiv. Systemic inequalities resulting in missing and murdered Indigenous women, men, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.
- C. There are a number of statues and monuments located on the grounds of Parliament; however, none of them recognize the First Peoples of Canada and their contributions.
- D. Heritage Canada administers the *Commemorate Canada* program to provide funding to initiatives that commemorate and celebrate historical figures, places, events, and accomplishments of national significance.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the First Nations-in-Assembly:

1. Call upon the federal government to allocate funds to create a national monument that is meant to commemorate all First Peoples and their contributions to Canadian society.

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2. Call upon all levels of government to support the creation of a First Peoples Monument, which will serve as a reminder to all members of Parliament to support First Peoples and to serve as a symbol of reconciliation and redress for past injustices and wrongs.
3. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to work with First Peoples leaders, the local First Nations Kitigan Zibi Anishnabeg and Algonquins of Pikwakanagan, Elders, youth, and artists to design a concept of a First Peoples Monument which would provide for commemoration and support for healing from intergenerational trauma, and to build for a stronger future.
4. Direct the AFN to approach Heritage Canada to fund an initiative that will result in the design, construction, and installation of a First Peoples Monument on the grounds of Parliament with input from First Peoples leaders, Elders, youth, and artists.

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