



September 3-5, 2025 • Hybrid *RBC Convention Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba*



Progress on Realizing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action – September 2025

OVERVIEW

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) annually assesses progress towards the full implementation of the <u>Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's 94 Calls to Action</u>, released on June 2, 2015. This report card identifies advancements and obstacles that have developed since June 2024 and incorporates them into a cumulative grading system.

There were no completed Calls to Action (CTA) for the 2024-2025 year. To date, there have been approximately 13 Calls to Action completed, with only two completed in the past five years. While assessing "completion" of CTA progress is challenging and can be subjective, it is clear that overall progress has been too slow and must improve. Highlights in 2024 include significant progress to advance CTA 53 through the establishment of an independent National Council for Reconciliation (NCR). The Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites Final Report and Reparations Framework was also released in 2024. This report references the CTAs throughout, highlighting progress and areas that require further effort. The final recommendations include 42 obligations that provide a clear framework to advance reconciliation and support the fulfillment of the CTA.

2025 marks the tenth anniversary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Final Report, and the federal government's lack of significant progress on the 94 Calls to Action marks the necessity for a renewed attitude to fulfill these mandates. During the 2025 federal election, the AFN highlighted the need to fulfill the 94 Calls to Action as a key priority for all governments through its federal election advocacy. The new government formed by Prime Minister Mark Carney creates fresh opportunities to advocate for the implementation of the Calls to Action and advancing systemic changes supporting Survivors, families, and First Nations. However, Prime Minister Carney's sweeping budget cuts of 15% over three years announced in July 2025 threaten the implementation of the Calls to Action. Essential programs for First Nations are already underfunded. The government needs to do more to provide essential services, not less. This means making firm commitments to help First Nations develop a better future and ensure prosperity for all.

"This year marks the 10th anniversary of the TRC 94 Calls to Action and the TRC's 10 principles. The outstanding work of the TRC must be matched by renewed action to address the substantial harms to First Nations from Indian Residential Schools. This requires investments, not cut-backs. In its budget decision-making, the federal Crown must make decisions to advance reconciliation. Otherwise, its stated commitment to reconciliation will be empty words. I remind federal decision-makers of TRC principle 5: Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. This is further reinforced by principle 9: Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources. Reconciliation will remain a far-off goal if budget decisions are not consistent with the guidance of the TRC. Together can we set Canada for success by making systemic changes in all areas of life, for the people now, and future generations." – National Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak



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METHODOLOGY

The AFN tracks the implementation of the CTAs by assessing the AFN's advocacy and joint work with the Government of Canada related to implementation. Additionally, the AFN utilizes the following resources to analyze and monitor progress:

- Indigenous Watchdog
- · CBC News Beyond 94
- · Government of Canada

For each action taken on a CTA, the AFN applies the following system to track its progress over time:



Full implementation of the CTAs often requires substantial resources to ensure First Nations are meaningfully included, based on the principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-discrimination, and good faith. Where progress was undertaken, but efforts have not resulted in meaningful advances as defined by First Nations, little to moderate progress is reported. If there are significant steps backward or significant stalls in progress, the level of progress is downgraded and reported on. This report card identifies advancements made since June 2023, adding to AFN's advocacy and analysis since the TRC Calls to Action release in 2015.

Steps Forward June 2024-June 2025:

- Health: The Canada Medical Association apologized for its role in the way Indigenous people are harmed by the Canadian health system and released 2025 Federal Election: CMA Policy Recommendations in March 2025 that included recommendations to ensure that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples have equitable access to care. In June 2025, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions also shared an apology at their biennial convention.
- Justice: In March 2025, the Department of Justice released the Indigenous Justice Strategy (IJS) that is aimed at addressing the overrepresentation of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis people in the criminal justice system. While this was a welcome announcement, no funding to support implementation was announced. Moving forward, implementation will require long-term sustainable funding commitments by the Government of Canada.



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- Missing Children and Burial Information: The Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked
 Graves and Burial released their Final Report and Reparations Framework on October 29, 2024. The
 report identifies 42 obligations that governments, churches, and other institutions must meet to
 implement an Indigenous-led Reparations Framework for Truth, Accountability, Justice, and
 Reconciliation.
- National Council for Reconciliation: The inaugural Board of Directors for the NCR was announced in March 2025 by the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs. The NCR was established through Bill C-29 and advances CTA 53 to create an independent national body to track the federal government's efforts to rebuild the relationship with Indigenous peoples.
- Sports and Reconciliation: In February 2025, Commonwealth Sport Canada became a Signatory with the Commonwealth Sport Lekwungen Declaration on Reconciliation and Partnership with Indigenous Peoples, becoming the first national Commonwealth sports association to do so.

Steps Backward June 2024-June 2025:

- Child Welfare: While some progress was made and a Draft Agreement on Long-Term Reform of First Nations Child and Family Services was reached jointly by the AFN, Chiefs of Ontario, Nishnawbe Aski Nation along with Canada, the Government of Canada has failed to return to negotiations to discuss much needed reforms to First Nations Child and Family Services.
- Education: The Government of Canada has not allocated any additional funding toward concluding new Regional Education Agreements since 2022, resulting in a growing backlog of six finalized but unfunded agreements. Funding for First Nations education infrastructure decreased by over \$100 million in the last fiscal year compared to the year prior, despite the AFN First Nations Education Infrastructure Capital Needs Assessment (2021) showing that more than half of all First Nations schools require additions or total replacement.
- Missing Children and Burial Information: The Government of Canada decided not to renew funding for the National Advisory for Committee on Residential Schools Missing Children and Unmarked Burials and the National Survivors' Secretariat in February 2025. This represents a disappointing step backwards.



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Moderate progress



Child Welfare (1-5)

Moderate progress has been made in this area. In 2023, the Federal Court of Canada approved a Final Settlement Agreement to compensate over 300,000 First Nations children and families who experienced discrimination through the First Nations Child and Family Services Program and the narrow application of Jordan's Principle. In March 2025, Canada made a significant step forward in finalizing the first two Claims Processes for the Removed Child Class and Removed Child Family Class. This ensures that First Nations harmed by Canada's discrimination can begin to see the restitution that is owed to them for the experience they endured. As of August 2025, over 40,000 claims have been received by the Administrator, and payments are beginning to reach individuals. Future Claims Processes for the remaining classes are forthcoming. While this is a welcome development, it should be clear that compensation is not equivalent to reconciliation. Canada must do right by First Nations children and their families by working with First Nations rights holders to meaningfully implement all of the Calls to Action pertaining to child welfare reform. Further, the number of First Nations children in care has not yet decreased. Neither the federal government, provinces, nor territories have prepared and published annual reports on the number of First Nations children in care. The AFN, Chiefs of Ontario, Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Canada jointly reached a Draft Agreement on Long-Term Reform of First Nations Child and Family Services in July 2024. In October 2024, the First Nations-in-Assembly voted to reject the Draft Agreement, noting gaps in the agreement and calling for a new governance structure to negotiate a new agreement. Despite the direction from First Nations leadership, the Government of Canada has yet to return to the negotiating table to collaborate with the newly-established National Children's Chiefs Commission to finalize critical reforms to support First Nations children to thrive in their homes, families and communities. On February 9, 2024, the Supreme Court of Canada affirmed that Bill C-92, An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth, and families is "constitutionally valid" after hearing arguments in December 2022.

Little progress



Education (6-12)

Little progress has been made in this area. Bill C-273, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (Corinne's Quest and the protection of children), died when Parliament was prorogued in January 2025. The current federal government has neither developed a joint strategy to eliminate education and employment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people nor addressed the backlog of First Nations post-secondary education students – only increasing the students funded in the Post-Secondary Student Support Program by 7% since 1996. Additionally, the lack of funding allocated to sign Regional Funding Formulas (REAs) in the past two federal budgets to give First Nations negotiation flexibility has led to a backlog of negotiated REAs that can't be implemented. Funding for First Nations education infrastructure has also decreased over time, and in 2024 some regions were unable to build any new schools, despite current overcrowding, due to lack of funding.

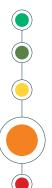


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Little progress



Language and Culture (13-17)

Little progress has been made in this area. Although the Indigenous Languages Act was passed in 2019, overall languages funding remains inadequate and has decreased since 2023/2024. Funding for Section 8 and 9 agreements under the Indigenous Languages Act has been entirely discontinued with no current plans for reinstatement. Even with the introduction of additional funding for general language revitalization initiatives in Budget 2024, there was an overall reduction in funding compared to what was offered in 2023/2024. The AFN estimates a need for \$3.8 billion over 5 years for First Nations languages; despite this expressed need, Canada is offering only \$425 million over the same period. This dereliction of duty is fundamentally opposed to the intention of the Indigenous Languages Act, which is expected to undergo an independent review beginning in October 2025.

Moderate progress



Health (18-24)

Moderate progress has been made in this area. In September 2024 and in June 2025, the Canada Medical Association (CMA) and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) respectively apologized for their roles in the harms Indigenous Peoples face in healthcare systems. The CMA released 2025 Federal Election: CMA Policy Recommendations in March 2025, which included recommendations to ensure that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples have equitable access to care through: stable, long-term support to health initiatives and control over healthcare, reintroduction of First Nations clean water legislation, and implementation of the CTAs. The CMA is in the process of updating their Code of Ethics to combat anti-Indigenous racism with a new draft set for release in early 2026. The CFNU stated they are taking steps to develop a plan to contribute to reconciliation. Budget 2023 included an investment of almost \$200 billion over 10 years to improve health care in Canada, with \$2 billion allocated for the new Indigenous Equity Fund.



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Little progress



Justice (25-42)

Little progress has been made in this area. In March 2025, the Department of Justice released the Indigenous Justice Strategy (IJS), a document aimed at addressing the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in Canada's justice systems through criminal justice system reforms and the revitalization of Indigenous laws and legal orders. While potentially transformative, no new funding has been identified to support implementation. On June 4, 2025, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada released their annual 2024-2025 Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report which discusses Canada's efforts to advance the Calls for Justice and the National Inquiry's Final Report. There were also various financial updates, including the federal government signing a \$1.1 billion class action lawsuit settlement for the mistreatment of Indigenous patients in 33 Federal Indian Hospitals in March 2025.

The IJS, and subsequent AFN First Nations Justice Strategy, provide a critical opportunity to address the crisis level of overrepresentation of Indigenous people within federal prisons that was reported in the Correctional Investigator of Canada's 2023 Annual Report. This report calls for a national decarceration strategy and the redirection of funds from federally-run to Indigenous-run programs.

Moderate progress



United Nations Declaration (43-44)

Moderate progress has been made in this area. Since the passage of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act in 2022, and the launch of the UN Declaration Action Plan in 2023, Canada has made varied progress in implementing its own objectives, detailed in 181 Action Plan Measures (APMs). Canada has made some progress for several APMs; however, the majority of APMs have yet to see meaningful action to ensure Canada's policies, legislation, consultation processes, and mandates are aligned with the spirit and intent of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Further, legal decisions such as the Federal Court's 2025 decision *Kebaowek First Nation v Canadian Nuclear Laboratories*, continue to demonstrate that the Government of Canada's duty to consult policies and procedures are well behind Canadian law and must be updated to include UNDRIP as a key consideration when determining whether the duty to consult has been met.

Finally, First Nations continue to express concern about limited funding to support their participation in the implementation of the National Action Plan.



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Little progress









Royal Proclamation & Covenant of Reconciliation (45-47)

Little progress has been made in this area. In 2023 the Vatican responded to Indigenous peoples' demands and formally repudiated the "Doctrine of Discovery;" however, no level of government has taken similar action. A subcommittee of the All-Parties Table to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement continues to draft a Covenant of Reconciliation. In 2024, the Government of Canada announced its intention to create a Commissioner for Modern Treaty Implementation. Enacting legislation that was introduced in October 2024 to establish this body died on the Order Paper when Parliament was prorogued in January 2025. Furthermore, while initial work has taken place to recognize Indigenous laws in negotiation and implementation processes, there has not been a substantive shift in the Government of Canada's position.

Little progress







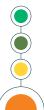


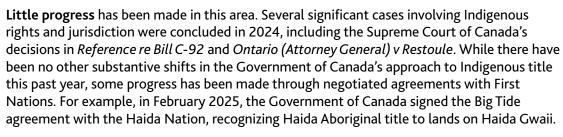
Settlement Agreement Parties & the United Nations Declaration (48-49)

Little progress has been made in this area. In 2023, the Vatican formally repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery and declared that the papal bulls did not adequately reflect the equal dignity and rights of Indigenous peoples and were never considered expressions of the Catholic faith. On July 27, 2022, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops requested the Vatican to issue a statement on the Doctrine of Discovery, which they had already repudiated in 2016. The Church Parties to the Settlement Agreement, including the Anglican Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Roman Catholic Entities Parties to the Settlement Agreement, the United Church of Canada and the Jesuits of English Canada, have all formally repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius.

Little progress

Equity in the Legal System (50-52)







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Significant progress

National Council for Reconciliation (53-56)





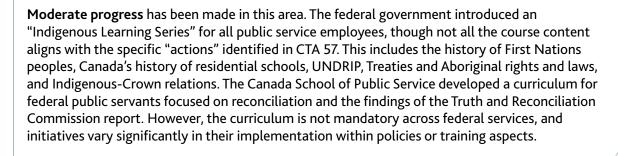


Significant Progress has been made in this area. Bill C-29, An Act to Provide for the Establishment of a National Council for Reconciliation, intended to fulfill CTA 53, came into effect on July 2, 2024. In 2025, the Minister for Crown-Indigenous Relations announced 9 members to the first Board of Directors for the NCR; an independent, Indigenous-led, national not-for-profit organization mandated to advance reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and provide oversight for the 94 CTAs. Bill C-29 has been criticized for a lack of long-term, multi-year funding commitments for the Committee and the amount of government influence over the selection of the inaugural Board of Directors.

Moderate progress

Training for Public Servants (57)





Moderate progress

Church Apologies and Reconciliation (58-61)



Moderate progress has been made in this area. In December 2024, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Canada issued a formal apology to Indigenous communities for their involvement in the programs at Indian Residential Schools and Indian Hospitals. They also released a summary report on the role of YWCA Canada in Canada's Residential Schools and the 'Indian Hospital' System. In July 2022, late Pope Francis delivered an apology for the behaviour of "some individuals" within the church at the site of the former Ermineskin Indian Residential School. In March 2024, the Pope made statements about returning Indigenous artifacts held in the Vatican Museum and allowing access to residential school records in Church archives. The Indigenous Reconciliation Fund, a federally incorporated not-for-profit charity with a Board of Directors, was created and is responsible for approving projects related to reconciliation. Additionally, in July 2024 the Canadian Catholic Bishops reaffirmed their support for repatriation efforts, while also pledging \$30 million in support for Indigenous priorities that support healing and reconciliation.



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Little progress

Education for Reconciliation (62-65)



Little progress has been made in this area. Various regional commitments have been made throughout the year. In April 2025, the Lakehead District School Board and Matawa First Nation Education Authority signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Eabametoong First Nation to enhance education opportunities for First Nations students.



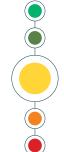
Youth Programs (66)



Little progress has been made in this area. The Government of Canada has committed \$301.4 million over two years starting in 2023-2024 through the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy program, which includes \$54 million for the First Nations and Inuit Employment Strategy. In November 2023, a report titled "Celebrating Leadership in Indigenous Education" was released outlining what the Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples heard from eight Indigenous youth leaders who spoke to curriculum changes, improved teacher training, and additional funding commitments to support Indigenous students.

Moderate progress

Museum & Archives (67-70)



Moderate progress has been made in this area. Calls to Action 67 and 70 have been completed by the Government of Canada. In 2023, archives, libraries, and documentary heritage institutions received \$1.5 million to fund 38 projects under the Documentary Heritage Communities Program, 11 of which were for Indigenous documentary heritage projects. The Museum of Vancouver has started shifting its methods for collecting and sharing items to better respect Indigenous cultures and stories. Similarly, in 2025, the Manitoba Museum apologized for keeping ancestral remains and will undertake a process with home communities to bring their ancestors home. The Canadian Museums Association continues to support repatriation efforts, stating in September 2024 the need for an Indigenous-led National Framework for Indigenous Cultural Heritage Rights which would support information sovereignty and the return of remains and artifacts.



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Moderate progress



Missing Children and Burial Information (71-76)

Moderate progress has been made in this area. The Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites released their Final Report and Reparations Framework on October 29, 2024. The report identifies 42 obligations that governments, churches, and other institutions must meet to implement an Indigenous-led Reparations Framework for Truth, Accountability, Justice, and Reconciliation. While this report is a positive step forward, we have not seen similar progress federally. In February 2025 the Government of Canada chose not to renew funding for the National Advisory Committee on Residential Schools Missing Children and Unmarked Burials and the National Survivors' Secretariat. The Government of Canada has not yet formally responded to the Final Report.

Little progress



National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (77-78)

Little progress has been made in this area. In September 2024 the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation announced 400 names were added to the missing registrar at the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. In May 2025, the names of 140 priests who served in Residential Schools were made public by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to aid in survivor research. In the same month, the Nunavut, Yukon, and Northwest Territories Premiers said they were committing a total of \$75,000 (\$25,000 from each territory) to establish a permanent home for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. In 2023, the Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Peoples released a report titled "Honoring the Children Who Never Came Home: Truth, Education and Reconciliation." The report identified various regions and institutions that failed to comply with CTA 77 by not releasing all documents in their possession relating to residential schools. Survivors of St. Anne's Residential School continue to express concern over Canada's handling and disclosure of their claims and information around abuse experienced within the school. They are seeking to appeal a March 2025 decision for Metatawabin RFD #2 – Fontaine et al. v. Attorney General of Canada et al that said Canada did not need to deliver updated reports or disclosure in concluded claims and that the survivors all had concluded claims.



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Moderate progress

Commemoration (79-83)



Moderate progress has been made in this area. In September 2024, APTN, CBC, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support the annual production of a national commemorative gathering around the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and in 2025 the Kamloops Indian Residential School was designated as a national historic site.

Significant progress

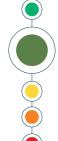
Media & Reconciliation (84-86)



Significant progress has been made in this area. CTA 84 and CTA 85 have been completed. Many journalism initiatives and training programs continue across various institutions across Canada. However, these programs are not mandatory for all students. As of December 2024, 48% of the schools of journalism in Canada address 60% less of the required content for CTA 86. However, a few post-secondary schools in Ontario have begun cooperating to offer journalism training to Indigenous students in remote communities. Carleton University in Ottawa, in partnership with Kenjgewin Teg in M'Chigeeng First Nation on Mnidoo Mnising Island and the First Nations Technical Institute in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory announced a new certificate program for Journalism in Indigenous communities.

Significant progress

Sports & Reconciliation (87-91)



Significant progress has been made in this area. In February 2025, Commonwealth Sport Canada became a signatory with the Commonwealth Sport Lekwungen Declaration on Reconciliation and Partnership with Indigenous Peoples, becoming the first national Commonwealth sports association to do so. In March 2025, the Canada Games Council, a non-profit organization, launched the Face of Our Games – a campaign around showcasing the stories of underrepresented groups involved in sport, including Indigenous representation. Two former athletes from Garden River First Nation are set to be inducted into the Canada Sports Hall of Fame as of June 2025.



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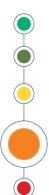


Business & Reconciliation (92)

Little progress has been made in this area. In June 2022, a National Indigenous Economic Strategy was released, developed by over 20 Indigenous organizations to outline approaches for Indigenous economic development. There has been minimal follow-up activity. In February 2025, Moody's Ratings, a company that provides international financial research, published the report *Spotlight into Indigenous communities in Canada* that said Canadian infrastructure organizations will begin to increasingly push projects on Indigenous territories with some involvement of Indigenous communities as co-investors. Furthermore, in April 2025, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business released *A Way Forward, Ontario's Path Towards Economic Reconciliation, Equity and Inclusive Growth*, a report series aimed at helping businesses advance reconciliation efforts.

In May 2025, the First Nations Procurement Authority was officially created to support First Nations businesses' access and success in securing government and corporate procurement opportunities. The inaugural board includes a member from each of the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association, AFOA Canada, the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers, the First Nations Finance Authority, and the First Nations Financial Management Board.

Little progress



Newcomers to Canada (93-94)

Little progress has been made in this area. Bill C-8, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's call to action number 94), received Royal Assent on June 21, 2021. The Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada revised a study guide, study materials, and a new citizenship kit for newcomers in partnership with Indigenous Peoples. Nearly four years later, the federal government is still struggling to announce the completion of the revised Citizenship Guide.