



**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
July 9, 10, 11, 2024, Montreal, QC

**Resolution no. 19/2024**

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**TITLE:** First Nations Languages Regional Allocation Formula

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**SUBJECT:** Languages

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**MOVED BY:** Kúkpi7 Fred Robbins, Esk'etemc First Nation, BC

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**SECONDED BY:** Paula Acoose, Proxy, Zagimē Anishinabēk, SK

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**DECISION** Carried; 1 Opposition; 1 Abstention

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**WHEREAS:**

- A.** The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which the Government of Canada has adopted without qualification and has passed legislation committing to implement, affirms:
- i. Article 13(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
  - ii. Article 13(2): States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.
  - iii. Article 14(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
  - iv. Article 14(3): States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language; and
  - v. Article 16(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination.

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**Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 11th day of July, 2024 in Montreal, Quebec**

*C. Woodhouse*

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- B. The *Indigenous Languages Act* (ILA) received Royal Assent on June 21, 2019, and provides legal assurance for adequate, sustainable and long-term funding for First Nations-led efforts to revitalize their languages.
- C. The ILA states that the Government of Canada recognizes that the rights of Indigenous peoples are recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* including rights related to Indigenous languages.
- D. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) *Revitalizing First Nations Languages: A Costing Analysis, 2022*, estimates the annual cost of First Nations language revitalization to be \$2.003 billion.
- E. The Government of Canada committed only approximately \$85 million to First Nations languages across Canada on an annual basis despite their legislative commitments to facilitate the provision of adequate and sustainable funding for Indigenous languages in the ILA.
- F. The Chiefs Committee on Languages (CCOL) met on March 29, 2023, and recommended by majority, a revised regional allocation formula (RAF) based on five factors including languages, population, language vitality, number of First Nations and census metropolitan areas, and remoteness with equal weighting.
- G. In July 2023, at the AFN Annual General Assembly, First Nations-in-Assembly did not achieve consensus on Draft Resolution 26/2023, *Equitable Funding for Language Revitalization*, which sought support for the revised RAF based on a formula with five factors weighted equally, as recommended by the CCOL by majority.
- H. The Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH) unilaterally decided to allocate a portion of First Nations' language revitalization funding through the status quo formula without the free, prior, and informed consent of First Nations.
- I. AFN Resolution 76/2023, *Support for Urgent First Nations Languages Funding*, called upon DCH to immediately provide \$18 million of new targeted funding to support regions negatively impacted by the status quo RAF; directs the AFN, CCOL and the TCOL to codevelop a RAF—consistent with Resolution 17/2022, *Support for the First Nations Languages Funding Model*—for new funding; and seeks to bring a consensus-based recommendation to First Nations-in-Assembly.

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

1. Call on the Government of Canada to fulfill their legislative requirements through the *Indigenous Languages Act* (ILA) to provide long-term, sustainable funding that reflects the actual costs to reclaim, revitalize, maintain, protect, and strengthen First Nations languages as determined by First Nations.
2. Call on the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to file a formal complaint with the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages (OCIL) regarding chronically inadequate funding and misalignment with the principles and objectives of the ILA.
3. Call on AFN Legal to provide an analysis, including recommendations on a potential Canadian human rights complaint on the ongoing and historical chronic underfunding of First Nations language reclamation and revitalization resulting in the further endangerment of First Nations languages.

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4. Call on the AFN to continue to work on gathering data on the regional allocation formula (RAF) factors outlined in the AFN's First Nations Languages Funding Model in full partnership with the Technical Committee on Languages (TCOL) to develop an evidence-based approach to the RAF supported by a national data collection strategy, and present it to the Chiefs Committee on Languages (CCOL) and Technical Committee on Languages (TCOL) for review and future co-development as soon as possible, but no later than two years.
5. Direct the AFN to host a facilitated two-day strategic planning session with the TCOL and CCOL to discuss long-term objectives to support future co-development, including a discussion on national data collection and a funding strategy, for the development of a revised languages funding formula, within six months. The CCOL and TCOL will reconvene after a framework is developed to further discuss the formula.
6. Affirm that a co-development approach concerning First Nations languages is not intended to detract or hinder any self-government processes or derogate any existing First Nations Treaty and Inherent rights.
7. Call on the Government of Canada to implement the commonly approved interim funding approach over 2 years, as agreed upon by the CCOL by consensus on July 10, 2024.
8. Call on the Government of Canada to work with First Nations to reallocate any unused funds, from the abovementioned formula as applied to Budget 2024 over 2 years, to ensure they are distributed to regions able to allocate the funds in a timely manner, and priority will be given to those regions with the greatest need.
9. Call on the Government of Canada to redistribute any unused funds from the OCIL to the ILC to support First Nations community-led language initiatives.

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