

Assembly of First Nations

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ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
September 3-4-5, 2025, Winnipeg, MB

Resolution no. 32/2025

TITLE: Five Percent Quota of Indigenous Music on Public and Private Radio

SUBJECT: Indigenous Languages

MOVED BY: Chief Jonathan Shetush, Innu Takuaitkan Uashat mak Mani-utenam, QC

SECONDED BY: Chief Sipi Flamand, Conseil des Atikamekw de Manawan, QC

DECISION Approved by the AFN Executive Committee by consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), 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.
 - 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.

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- 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.
 - vi. Article 16(2): States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity. States, without prejudices to ensuring full freedom of expression, should encourage privately owned media to adequately reflect indigenous cultural diversity.
- B. In 2019, the Parliament of Canada passed the *Indigenous Languages Act* (ILA). It purports to recognize that section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, includes 'rights related to Indigenous languages'. However, this Act fails to identify any specific First Nations language rights or provide mechanisms for their enforcement. The language rights of Canada's official language minorities, on the other hand, are clearly defined and enforceable since they were adopted in the *Constitution Act, 1982*.
- C. The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the period between 2022 and 2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL 2022-2032), this resolution urges the need to act collaboratively to ensure that no one is left behind and to promote and pursue the objectives of the UN Declaration by fostering international cooperation to support national and regional efforts.
- D. The Declaration on First Nations Languages Rights adopted by the Chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL) states that systemic discrimination, racism and assimilationist cultural and educational policies of the federal and provincial governments have hindered the transmission of First Nations languages, and the First Nations languages rights are positive rights, which require that First Nations governments, as well as federal and provincial governments, take positive measures to ensure their respect and implementation, both within First Nations institutions and in federal and provincial institutions:
- i. Article 20: First Nations have the right to access radio programs in their First Nations language through Indigenous community radio and more generally within the Canadian broadcasting system.
 - ii. Article 39: First Nations have the right to reparation and the restitution of their First Nations languages in the state they would have existed in had they not been subjected to assimilationist policies that were destructive to their language and cultures.
- E. In June 2019, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) launched a consultation to co-develop a new Indigenous broadcasting policy with First Nations, Métis and Inuit so that the Canadian broadcasting system can better support the needs of Indigenous Peoples, but despite the participants' recommendations, the current Indigenous Broadcasting Policy does not set quotas for broadcasting a minimum amount of Indigenous programs or music in Canada.
- F. In 2023, the Government of Canada passed the *Broadcasting Act*, which states that programming and employment opportunities within the broadcasting system must serve the needs, interests, and aspirations of the Canadian population. This policy must first and foremost recognize the unique place of Indigenous Peoples and languages, while also reflecting equality of rights, linguistic duality, and the multicultural and multiracial character of Canadian society.

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- G. In 2023, the AFNQL adopted a resolution requesting that the CRTC implement the Federal Government's commitment to reflect the special place of Indigenous Peoples in Canadian society by imposing a five percent quota for Indigenous music on private and public commercial radio in Quebec and Canada.
- H. Our languages are the first official languages of our territories and they must be valued and promoted in order to repair the harm done to them. We must collectively fight the system of thought that has tried to make them invisible. The creation of content in Indigenous languages will enable greater visibility and valorization of Indigenous languages and create economic development for the Indigenous cultural community.
- I. The intent of the residential school system was the genocide of Indigenous Peoples by the extinguishment of our cultures and languages. The Government of Canada has a responsibility to work concretely towards the reparation and restitution of Indigenous languages.

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

- 1. In the spirit of reconciliation, call on the Government of Canada to fulfill its legislative requirements through the *Indigenous Languages Act* (ILA) and the *Canadian Broadcasting Act* taking concrete action to promote and protect Indigenous languages.
- 2. Call on the Government of Canada to appoint an Indigenous Commissioner to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).
- 3. Urge the CRTC to implement the Federal Government's commitment to reflect the special place of Indigenous Peoples in Canadian society by imposing a five percent quota for Indigenous music on private and public commercial radio in Canada.
- 4. Call on the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to advocate for a greater ratio of Indigenous language music with the CRTC.
- 5. Call for adequate funding to support the production of content in Indigenous languages and for increased funding for Indigenous radio.

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