

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS



ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013



About the artwork:

The Wolf and the Raven/crow have been and remain to be important symbols for many First Nation people of the Yukon. Of particular importance is the land and all that nature has to do with life in the North. In this painting you see the close association with the land and nature. The Wolf and the moon are spiritual elements of the natural world we live in. The Raven, long associated with the spiritual world, sits perched on a tree as if speaking to the spirit of the Wolf. Far off in the sky you can see the eagle, ravens and the moon, also symbols of spiritual significance. Artist Mark Preston, Master of the Copper, was born in Dawson City, Yukon. He is of Tlingit and Irish ancestry. About his art, Mark says: "When I think about what art is, it is more than illustration or objects to be doted over. Art is the magic, the glue that binds and brings us together. It is the language that transcends its forms. Art gives us reason to think, ponder and speak our minds".

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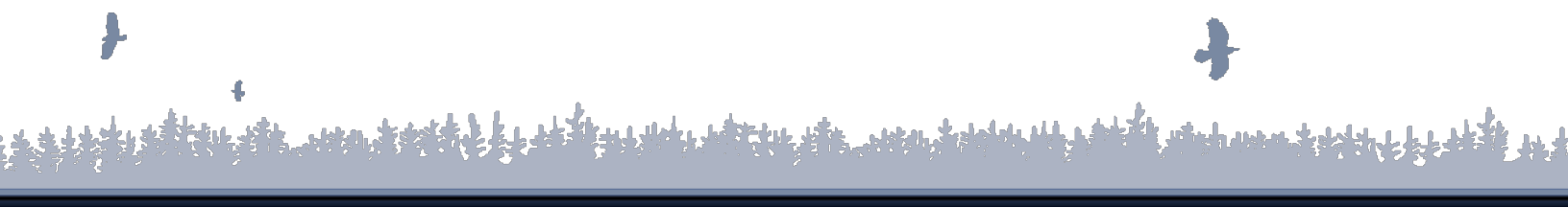
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NATIONAL CHIEF SHAWN A-IN-CHUT ATLEO

Welcome to our 2013 Annual General Assembly in the Yukon! First, I wish to thank our hosts for this important gathering. I was privileged to stand with the Yukon leadership last month announcing the theme of our Assembly including Kwanlin Dün First Nation Acting Chief Jessie Dawson, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council Chief Kristina Kane and AFN Yukon Regional Chief Mike Smith.

The theme of the AFN's 34th Annual General Assembly, "Our Nations, Our Rights, Our Future: Empowering Our Citizens to Drive Change", reflects the growing movement among First Nations across the country acting for change based on inherent rights, title and the full, meaningful implementation of Treaty and agreements in accordance with their spirit and intent.

Our gathering, as Assemblies are every year, is an important time for our Nations. We will join the Yukon leadership in celebration of their culture, their accomplishments and also the challenges they face as we discuss and strategize on how to advance First Nation priorities and mandates from coast to coast to coast.

This is a time of unprecedented engagement and mobilization of our peoples. Now, we must build and support the momentum of First Nations driving change by our peoples for our peoples.

As you will see throughout this report that includes comprehensive updates on all of our activities and the advancements of all resolutions and mandates, it has been a tremendously busy year. As a result of the determination of our leadership, we have pushed for commitments and for progress at every level – domestically – both federally and with the provinces, judicially and internationally – through advocacy, through meetings and through public relations and public education. We have expressed clear priorities to advance our rights through treaty implementation and recognition of our inherent title. We have brought focus and urgent attention to the matters affecting our children including education and we have highlighted the fundamental need for community safety and security and ending violence against women and girls.

While the work is never easy, and the fight continues on many fronts, it is important to recognize that the persistence of our leadership has resulted in new recognition, new discussion and possibly new opportunity. This persistence has led to governments finally referencing support for moving forward on Treaty implementation and strengthening the Treaty relationship. Our Nations are clear and have pressed to see the vision of Treaty implemented in the original spirit and intent as our collective ancestors had envisioned. Our leadership has rolled up their sleeves and continued our work – based on a Treaty by Treaty, nation-to-nation approach grounded in the full spirit and intent of Treaty.



This was the focus of our National Treaty Forum held this past spring – where all gathered not as regions or communities – but as Treaty Nations designing their own plans for Treaty implementation based on their sovereignty, inherent jurisdictions and laws. As one Elder remarked, “I have been waiting my whole life for this discussion”.

Persistent advocacy has also led to recognition, for the first time, of the need for fundamental reforms in key policy areas – most importantly comprehensive claims. First Nations have strongly advocated for fundamental reform based on recognition and implementation of our inherent rights and title as affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Discussions are now underway that must result in this reform as expeditiously as possible.

Addressing fundamental land rights issues is directly linked to addressing poverty and unleashing our rightful economic potential through First Nation driven and determined sustainable economic development. As set out by the Courts and in the United Nations Declaration, the requirement for free, prior and informed consent is an established standard that must be met through full and earliest possible engagement of First Nations in any development project. Governments must come to the table to address regulatory barriers as well as to affirm approaches and agreements with First Nations on resource revenue sharing.

Perhaps more so than any other issues, we have pressed the priority of fairness for our children. Through the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal along with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, through forums such as the Council of the Federation and with universities and education associations, our demand for fairness and our advocacy is having an impact. Without a doubt, this hard work must and will continue. We will achieve First Nations control of First Nations education and nurture and support the success of every one of our children.

We honour all of the leaders who have passed into the spirit world this year and we’ll look to dedicate time to remember all of the leaders during our Assembly. Many of these remarkable men and women embraced and worked for healing and reconciliation at the same time as persistently and doggedly fighting for our rights. As we remember them, I am also reminded of the future that they stood for – a brighter tomorrow for our children so that our future generations never have to experience the disastrous history that so many of us have survived and lived through.

I am tremendously proud and inspired by the work of our peoples in every region of the country every day. The AFN will remain focused on its role of national advocacy and will stand with our leaders, grassroots heroes and champions to achieve fairness and success for our children right across the country.



I also wish to extend my personal thanks to members of the National Executive as well as to the members of our Elders, Women's and Youth Councils. Your dedication and commitment to the work is critical to our overall success as an organization and ultimately to achieving change for our peoples.

Looking forward we will continue to work understanding that AFN's role is to facilitate change while always fully respecting that it is each Treaty Nation and every First Nation that must decide its path forward. First Nations have the solutions and AFN can and must play a central role in facilitating the exchange of information, supporting every First Nation in their pursuit of meaningful change and facilitating access to decision-makers and Parliamentarians.

This October, we will also commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the Royal Proclamation issued by the Crown. The full understanding of the Proclamation including our oral histories is critical for all Canadians. This is an important opportunity for public education and awareness of the commitment to partnership and recognition of our Nations.

I believe that together, we can and will continue to move forward, inspired by our youth and guided by our ancestors always. By supporting one another, we will achieve the vision of our ancestors and deliver on the promise for our children.

Respectfully,

National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo

REGIONAL CHIEF MORLEY GOOGOO NOVA SCOTIA AND NEWFOUNDLAND



Wela'lin / Meegwetch,

I would like to begin by welcoming everyone to our 34th AFN Annual General Assembly here in Whitehorse, Yukon. I also would like to thank our hosts in Whitehorse who have worked so hard with our Ottawa team to host our Assembly. It takes tremendous expertise, time and commitment to ensure the success of a national event like this, gathering leaders, Elders, youth and all other delegates from across the country.

Without a doubt, this year has witnessed great diversity and varied viewpoints from all our leaders, grassroots groups, youth and critics. All have brought to the surface the many challenges we face as Indigenous peoples of this land. This is a time to unite and continue to share our views, listening to each other to find common ground on how we can move forward together with the challenges we face in our communities.

Our people share the view that the federal government is overlooking our priorities, a serious concern of those who are in the front lines protesting and standing up for our rights. It is most crucial at times like this that we remain focused and communicate with each other while we develop strategies to move forward with a united front. This is both possible and necessary if we are to continue to make progress in the areas we are all so passionate about: our people, communities, Treaties, and the betterment of the Next 7 Generations.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Nova Scotia Education

Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK)

I was very pleased to participate in the grand opening of the Wagmatcookewey School on June 10, 2013 and want to thank the National Chief for making the long trip from B.C. to take part in this community's great accomplishment. The new school was part of the success of the MK Self-Government Agreement that was initiated in 1998. This is the third school built and the fourth has already begun in Membertou First Nation, along with renovations to an existing P-12 school in Eskasoni First Nation. They are adding on a much needed gymnasium to their school. I am most proud of the fact that our agreement here in Nova Scotia has given the First Nations the power and ability to determine where schools will be built, the kind of decision that was previously made by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC). As a result of unified communities working together, Nova Scotia last year achieved a graduation rate of 89.3%, the highest among First Nations communities across Canada, validating that First Nation control of First Nation education works.

Implementation of the new AANDC National Social Policy Manual in Maritime region – Overview & Update

A federal court judge issued an injunction over one year ago that temporarily prevents the federal government (AANDC) from reducing social assistance rates for First Nations in the Maritimes (N.B., P.E.I. and N.S.). AANDC developed a new national social policy manual that it wanted the Atlantic First Nations to implement by April 1, 2012, which included a reduction in social assistance (SA) rates in this region (by mirroring the relevant provincial rates), which would mean significantly less money for SA recipients living on-reserve.

In her decision, the judge cited the absence of any consultation with First Nations about this new policy manual or its implementation. She also noted that potential harm (emotional and psychological stress) could be caused by implementing the new rates.

The injunction is temporary; it will remain in force until the judge rules on the Chiefs' application for judicial review of the federal government's decision to implement the manual. The impact of this injunction is that First Nations in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island do not have to implement the new relevant provincial SA rates. In other words, it is status quo until a decision can be made on the judicial review application.

The judicial review hearing was held on June 19-20, 2013 at the Halifax Federal Law Courts. We are currently awaiting the decision, which can be expected to take anywhere from a few months to a year.

Assembly of Nova Scotia Chiefs and Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn/Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative (KMK)

This has been a year where there has been much awakening, passion, and resistance to proposed mining and exploring of our natural resources. Many demonstrations have been held in our region along with many questions regarding consultation of our people and what is happening at the negotiations table. Both community and grassroots groups have become interested in the negotiations process. The Made-In-Nova Scotia Process has been a topic of discussion here in Nova Scotia. People are voicing their concerns and Chiefs listened to and worked with concerned community members, answering questions on the process. In March 2013, the Chiefs agreed to pause negotiations with the government until a series of community meetings were held with all 13 communities with both KMK staff and concerned Mi'kmaq citizens. Both groups, with their representatives, had the opportunity to voice their points of view at these community meetings. The meetings have now been completed and the report will be presented to the Assembly on July 9-10 where Chiefs will decide and determine how they will move forward. The meetings provided much insight and information to the people that attended and the Chiefs, along with KMK, will continue to host these meeting as the negotiation process moves forward.

Regional Chief's Office in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

The Office of Regional Chief in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland has been an independent office for over 18 years and not been part of any Provincial Territorial Organization (PTO). We are continually looking at ways to improve our methodology and to build on our relationship with the AFN national office in Ottawa. Similar to all First Nations we are working with limited funds and decreasing budgets to carry out our work and must creatively develop new methods to overcome these issues while increasing accountability and transparency. Achieving this is building trust on the effectiveness of our Regional Office. I want to thank the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs for their continued support during the transition from my role as former Chief of 19 years in my community of Waycobah to my current role of Regional Chief of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

National Education Portfolio

The principle of First Nations control of First Nations education is the unifying force for First Nations across the country. National advocacy initiatives are focussed on supporting the implementation of locally designed and regionally supported initiatives.

In the past year we have had several opportunities to strengthen the dialogue among the First Nations leadership on the issue of First Nations control of First Nations education. The 2012 AFN Annual General Assembly mandated that a Special Assembly on Education be convened prior to the end of the year. This took place in October, 2012. The Special Chiefs Assembly in December, 2012 also provided an opportunity for the First Nations leadership to share their priorities in education. In addition, the AFN Chiefs Committee on Education had several meetings, linked to the Assemblies, as well as teleconferences, to share regional perspectives.

A primary concern for First Nations is the fact that the federal government is proceeding with the development of a First Nations Education Act. Regional consultations have been held, and more are scheduled. The federal government has committed to sharing a Bill with First Nations in August, prior to submitting it to Parliament. First Nations are united in expressing the concern that the consultation process has not adequately fulfilled the legal obligations of the Crown.

First Nations organizations across the country have responded in various ways to the initial consultations, conducted in eight cities across the country. First Nations in British Columbia have issued a position paper, and initiated a community-based letter writing campaign opposing the process and the unilateral implementation of the federal legislative agenda. First Nations in Ontario and Manitoba have sent correspondence to the federal government to oppose the process. The Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador tabled a public statement, position paper, and a legal opinion to oppose the process. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations has repeatedly issued press statements to oppose federal legislation. First Nations representatives from the Atlantic region have issued concern with the process. Treaties 6, 7, and 8 have advised the federal government that they will proceed with the development of treaty-based laws in education.

It is clear that any national process must create the room to enable Regional First Nations organizations to design their education systems and implement their inherent and Treaty rights in a manner which reflects local and regional priorities.

Events and Accomplishments

I have been asked to be on the advisory board of Friends United Cultural Centre along with former Premier Rodney MacDonald, gifted Mi'kmaq artist Raven Davis and founder Rolf Bouman. Friends United is an original concept in Cape Breton, which enables local artists to both showcase their art while developing the necessary skills to become self-sustainable, empowering them with a sense of identity as Aboriginal people. It is a one-of-a-kind project allowing Canadians to view First Nations art and its people in a positive light. I encourage all of you to visit the centre and also to browse their website at www.friends-united.ca.

Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Summer Games

I would like to congratulate the Waycobah First Nation, my home community, in hosting the 5th Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Summer Games this August 2013. I want to acknowledge the hard work and commitment put forth by the volunteers and staff as they prepare to host this year's games.

In Closing

I wish to extend my thoughts and prayers to all the First Nations in Alberta and Manitoba who have been affected by the serious flooding and to all other regions that have experienced similar challenges. It is my sincere hope that you manage these difficult times with proper support from friends, family and surrounding communities, and that the federal government ensures that your Chiefs and leaders receive the help needed to rebuild your homes and your lives.

The Annual General Assembly is a time to reflect on the issues and challenges we have faced throughout the year and to provide direction and guidance to the steps we must take together to work for the betterment of our communities and our people. I wish everyone a great experience in this beautiful region and once again thank the host committee in Whitehorse for all their hard work which I am certain will make our experience here a memorable one.

In the Spirit of Peace and Friendship,

Regional Chief Morley Googoo

REGIONAL CHIEF ROGER AUGUSTINE NEW BRUNSWICK AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



Pjila'si. It is my great honour to welcome the Elders, Chiefs and delegates from across Canada to the Assembly of First Nations' 34th Annual General Assembly.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to provide an overview of activities and issues impacting my region.

Fisherman's Pow Wow – "Spirit of Peace and Friendship"

I am proud to announce the 2nd Annual Fisherman's Pow Wow – "Spirit of Peace and Friendship" will be taking place on June 30 - July 1, 2013 at the Waterford Green Park, Miramichi, NB. The huge success at last year's event is evidence of our communities and cultures collectively working together in the Spirit of Peace and Friendship. The Pow Wow will showcase First Nations, Irish, Scottish, and Acadian cultures through song, dance, and art.

Mi'kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island

The Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI (MCPEI) is a forum for the two PEI First Nations to address issues related to advancement of Aboriginal and Treaty rights. It is a tribal council and provincial territorial organization (PTO) governed by a Board of Directors with membership from the band councils of Abegweit and Lennox Island First Nations.

MCPEI promotes knowledge and understanding of Mi'kmaq rights by conducting research, developing and implementing initiatives, and building relationships necessary to resolve issues in a cooperative manner.

Assembly of First Nations' Chiefs in New Brunswick

The Assembly of First Nations' Chiefs in New Brunswick is holding Treaty implementation and self-determination discussions with its member communities in connection with the Trilateral Process that involves the Assembly, Canada and New Brunswick.

The Interim Consultation Protocol which establishes a formal process for Crown consultation (federal and provincial) is being executed.

The Jordan's Principle agreement is being implemented.

We are finalizing a proposed methodology on Indigenous Knowledge which addresses a wide range of issues including: authority, cataloguing or archiving, certification, collection, ethics, ownership, protection, use, and verification.

We are developing a proposal for the establishment of a First Nations' Research Institute that would deal with all matters of interest to New Brunswick First Nations and would combine Indigenous Knowledge with Western science and social science methods of research and study.

The Assembly is engaging with industry and is in consultation with the provincial and/or federal Crown on a wide range of issues including: agriculture, anthropology, aquaculture, archaeology, child and family services, crime and public safety, culture and heritage, Department of National Defence, disposition of Crown lands, education, energy, environment and environmental protection, fisheries, forestry, health, language, mining, parks and protected areas, revenue sharing, transportation, violence against women, and water.

National Initiatives

As a member of the AFN Executive Committee, I continue to advocate for First Nations on the Environmental Stewardship, Fisheries and Economic Partnerships portfolios. Comprehensive updates on activities in these areas can be found within the annual report.

Reflecting on the past year I feel we have faced many challenges, but united in our common purpose to pursue full opportunities for our children, our families, our communities and our Nations. I look forward to another year of working together for a strong and united future.

Yours in the spirit of collaboration and partnership – *We'lalin and Woliwon!*

Regional Chief Roger Augustine



REGIONAL CHIEF GHISLAIN PICARD QUEBEC AND LABRADOR



The Chiefs of our territories have been tireless in pursuing the defence of our rights for the benefit of our populations. The challenges of our First Nation governments in relation to the federal and provincial governments are many and of paramount importance. For the purposes of this report, I want to look at two of these challenges in particular which have held our attention, and resulted in numerous efforts from our Chiefs.

The first challenge involves the federal government and its stubbornness to impose a piece of legislation on education. Our Assembly stated its position numerous times on this subject: education is a vital issue for our children and for our future as a Nation. We have been trying for years to engage the federal government in implementing the solutions that we have developed, as a result of our experience as leaders, parents or teachers. In response, the federal government wishes to impose a law. Since when does a piece of legislation become suitable to resolve such complex issues? What exactly is the goal pursued by the federal government: to improve the education of our children or evade its responsibility? This is not about our Chiefs objecting to a piece of legislation; it is a matter of making the federal government listen to reason, reminding them of their mandate and obligations to our Nations and our youth.

Our Chiefs in Assembly adopted a political Declaration which addresses a wide range of our concerns and asserts them clearly and firmly. We also took the opportunity to report on the situation at the annual session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and to produce and release a statement to that effect.

To date, the response of the Aboriginal Affairs Minister and Deputy Minister is very disappointing. The formal positions that we adopted and officially provided to the government have not been taken into account. The federal government clings to its objective as the only one that seems to exist. Let me repeat, it is a very disappointing response and it will be our children who pay the price for it.

With the provincial government, our Chiefs have undertaken once again all means available to defend their Aboriginal rights, in particular with respect to territories and resources. Upon the election of the Parti québécois minority government on September 4, 2012, the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL) called on the government to participate in a Summit on territories and resources within the first 100 days of its mandate. The Summit was held on December 3rd with the attendance of the vast majority of our Chiefs, along with the Premier and several members of the provincial government. At the Summit, the AFNQL focussed the discussions on the co-management and the conservation of the territory and resources, a consultation leading to accommodations, and the royalties on the exploitation of resources.

The AFNQL and the provincial government arranged for a series of meetings, the latest of which took place on June 18, 2013, again in the presence of the Premier, to review the achievements of the past six months following the Summit. On a number of occasions during the past few months, unilateral decisions made by the government relating to the territories and the resources nearly derailed the process undertaken with Quebec. Gathered in Assembly on June 11-13, 2013, the Chiefs nevertheless decided to maintain the discussions and pursue the process with the provincial government. The issues at stake are of prime importance and it is never easy with the province when it comes to land rights and access to resources. But the discussions will continue.

Iame,

Regional Chief Ghislain Picard

REGIONAL CHIEF STAN BEARDY ONTARIO



Wahcheeyeh! Greetings! This past year has been challenging but also encouraging. It is clear that we must constantly exercise vigilance to protect against the further erosion of our rights while also continuing to assert our Inherent authority on our traditional lands and on those matters integral to our nations. The current federal government refuses to respect our Inherent rights and has failed to work with us to address the many priorities that are critical to the safety, security and future prosperity of our nations. This remains an ongoing challenge.

I am encouraged by the strength demonstrated by First Nation citizens in standing up for their rights through their participation in Idle No More rallies and events. As a First Nation leader, I understand that we need our citizens to be engaged and active in protecting and asserting our rights. If we are to make progress in improving the lives of our people, we need our citizens actively engaged and pulling in the same direction.

There are 133 First Nations in Ontario spread throughout the province. Though there is much diversity, the Indigenous nations in Ontario share many common concerns and priorities. The Political Confederacy is comprised of the Grand Chiefs of the various Treaty groups/regions as well as a representative of the Independent First Nations, the Grand Chief of Akwesasne and the Chief of the Six Nations of the Grand River. The Political Confederacy works together to bring the views of the respective First Nations and citizens in their area forward in an effort to devise political strategies and advocacy efforts to support each other and to pursue common priorities.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

A key common priority involves ongoing advocacy aimed at improving living conditions in our communities. It is clear that temporary solutions and short-term funding fail to meet the needs in our communities. First Nations leadership in Ontario has developed a Strategic Framework in an effort to collectively and strategically address the fundamental flaws in the First Nation-Crown relationship. A fundamental shift in the First Nation-Crown relationship is required, not minor tweaking that further entrenches the status quo.

The three key objectives of the Strategic Framework include a focus on re-building and asserting nationhood, strengthening our economies and building stronger external relations. A few years ago, First Nations leadership in Ontario mandated the establishment of a Nation-Building Task Force to focus on the steps required to re-build our nations and assert our inherent rights and authority. This work is to include the identification of best practices to build on and the development of tools that could assist First Nations engaged in nation-building efforts, as well as those First Nations interested in taking concrete steps to assert

nationhood. This work remains an important priority especially in light of the challenges Indigenous nations are confronted with, including the current onslaught of federal legislation which has been developed by the federal government without appropriate consultation with First Nations. Several bills such as C-27: *First Nations Financial Transparency Act*, S-8: *First Nations Drinking Water Act* and S-2: *Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act*, have been passed by Parliament and will receive Royal Assent prior to the summer over the objections of First Nations, the very people that will be most affected.

The First Nations in Ontario are strong Treaty nations. We are committed to ensuring the enforcement and full implementation of our Treaties. The First Nations in Ontario will work together to determine our response to the proposed High Level Mechanism on Treaty implementation that is a result of the January 11, 2013 meeting between the Prime Minister, National Chief and a group of First Nation leaders. Treaty implementation remains a key priority.

Similar to many First Nations across Canada, the First Nations in Ontario are working to build our economies and more fully participate in the mainstream economy. The First Nations in our region are already contributing to the economy of Ontario and there is potential to contribute much more. Economic leakage studies clearly show the scale of First Nations' contributions to the economies in their areas. There is much more work to do in this area and we will continue to work together to look for ways to build our economies.

The 250th Anniversary of the Royal Proclamation on October 7, 2013 is an opportunity to reaffirm the First Nations perspective leading up to the Royal Proclamation and the Treaty of Niagara in 1764. Following the Seven Years War, and the British claim to dominance over the territory in what is now known as Canada, Indigenous leaders such as Pontiac were successfully demonstrating their military strength and refusal to be subject to the rule of colonial governments. This greatly contributed to the British Crown including specific provisions relating to Indigenous nations in the Royal Proclamation. Indigenous leaders insisted on maintaining their sovereignty and the concepts of non-interference, peace and friendship. The Royal Proclamation is an important document as it acknowledges our nations and set out general principles of treaty-making but must be considered in the appropriate context, including the meeting at Niagara in 1764 and prior relations and agreements between Indigenous peoples and colonial governments.

At the international level, the First Nations in Ontario participated in the 12th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and Canada's Universal Periodic Review. The Chiefs of Ontario will endeavour to ensure the meaningful involvement of First Nations in Ontario in the upcoming visits of the three international human rights bodies, including two from the United Nations who are anticipated this fall. We will also monitor the preparatory activities related to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples scheduled for September 2014 and the work being undertaken in relation to the Doctrine of Discovery.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

We view the visit from the three international human rights bodies as an important opportunity to convey our perspectives and strengthen advocacy at the international level on key priorities.

The First Nations in Ontario recognize that we cannot be simply reacting to the federal government's agenda. We must be disciplined and stay focused on our agenda and our priorities – nationhood, protecting and asserting our inherent rights and building and strengthening our economies.

As a matter of priority, the First Nations in our region will discuss the development of a plan to phase out of the *Indian Act*. This work must be undertaken in close collaboration and with careful planning. There are many considerations that must be taken into account and it must be done with the full participation of First Nations. What we know for certain is that we cannot remain stuck with the status quo and subject to the whims of the federal government. We must take control and take action to improve the lives of our citizens and to make the change we want to see.

Meegwetch,

Stan Beardy



REGIONAL CHIEF PERRY BELLEGARDE SASKATCHEWAN

Tansi:

I bring greetings from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN). I take this opportunity to greet you and again, outline the responsibilities of myself as the FSIN Chief along with our Executive. As Chiefs, our responsibilities are set out, in part, through a system of Portfolios and Commissions:

Perry Bellegarde, Office of Chief

- AFN Regional Chief
- National Treaty Portfolio
- Legislative Assembly
- Executive Council/Indian Government Commission
- Lands and Resources Commission
- Gaming Commission
- Treaty Governance Office
- Intergovernmental Relations



Kimberley Jonathan, Office of the 1st Vice-Chief

- Health & Social Development Commission
- First Nations Women's Commission

Bobby Cameron, Office of 2nd Vice-Chief

- Education and Training Commission
- Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre
- First Nations University of Canada (FNUniv)
- Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies
- Saskatchewan Indian Training and Assessment Group
- 2013 Pow Wow

Edward Dutch Lerat, Office of 3rd Vice-Chief

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic & Community Development Commission • Veterans & Bold Eagle • Centre of Excellence • North American Indigenous Games 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate • Indian Resource Council • Independent Bands |
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Simon Bird, Office of 4th Vice-Chief

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justice Commission • Urban Development Committee • Treasury Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports, Culture & Recreation • Youth • Treaty Rights Protection Fund |
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KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Canada - First Nations Relations

In January 2012, we participated in the Crown - First Nations Gathering. At that time, we were optimistic that the gathering would lead to better relations between Canada and First Nations. The January 11, 2013 meeting with the Prime Minister and members of the federal Cabinet brings a similar optimism. Since January, we have hosted the National Treaty Forum on March 26-27 on the Whitecap Dakota First Nation, just outside of Saskatoon. A Summary Report has been provided as has an update regarding Treaty Implementation and Enforcement in this annual report. On June 18th, a secondary meeting with key representatives from Treaty territories was convened in Ottawa at the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) office. A Chiefs Task Force on Treaty Implementation and Enforcement should be struck in the near future to ensure that there is high-level federal political oversight of Treaty Implementation and Enforcement such that Treaties are honoured. At the time of writing this report, a letter requesting high-level oversight regarding Treaty Implementation has been provided to the Prime Minister's Office and we await a reply.

Canada's legislative agenda, however, remains inconsistent with the promises on January 11, 2013. This is especially true with respect to Bill C-428, the Private Member's Bill to repeal sections of the *Indian Act*. On April 30, 2013, I appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. The fact that Bill C-428 will not facilitate a Treaty Implementation Act nor uphold Treaty rights is one of the main points raised. In addition, the need for fully financed, long-term, sustainable process for Treaty Implementation fully supported by Cabinet and the Prime Minister's Office was clearly stated in my formal submission to the Standing Committee.

Canada's decision to make deep cuts in the financial resources provided to some of our key organizations across the country remains a critical issue. Maintaining our collective voice remains essential for First Nations to uphold our collective and individual rights. Nationally, I remain committed to push for long-term, sustainable funding for our provincial and territorial organizations as well as Tribal Councils. Securing 'own source revenues' is a possibility in Saskatchewan and something which the Office of the Chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations is pursuing.

These challenging times continue. We have many issues in common. I am honoured to serve as Chief of the FSIN, as well as on the National Executive of the AFN. I stand firm in my commitment to develop a unified approach in securing the recognition and implementation of our individual and collective rights.

In unity,

Perry Bellegarde
Chief, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations

REGIONAL CHIEF CAMERON ALEXIS ALBERTA

Aba Washded, on behalf of the Chiefs from the First Nations of Treaty No. 6, Treaty No. 7 and Treaty No. 8 (Alberta), greetings is extended to all the leaders and citizens of our First Nations across our country. It is indeed our honour to provide an overview of activities and key issues undertaken by our leadership this past fiscal year.

Firstly, we acknowledge the former Regional Chief, George Stanley, for the services he provided during his tenure at the Assembly of First Nations on our behalf. We recognize and give appreciation for his efforts on behalf of our peoples.

As the Regional Chief, I wish to acknowledge the Chiefs of our region for the confidence they have bestowed in me to assume the duties and responsibilities of the office of the AFN Regional Chief (Alberta). I assumed this position from the election held January 31, 2013 at our Winter Assembly of Treaty Chiefs. I have taken an oath to uphold the integrity and duties as provided to me by the Chiefs, Elders and citizens who witnessed my taking of the Oath of Office. I shall carry out their directives to the best of my abilities and with their guidance.



KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Treaty

The Chiefs of our region gave instructions and the mandate to the Grand Chiefs to attend the meeting with Prime Minister Harper on January 11, 2013 based on the Treaty Relationship and government-to-government relationship that has been developed. From this meeting, the Chiefs convened an assembly and have placed Treaty implementation as a priority to move forward in ensuring the inherent and Treaty rights of our Indigenous citizens are protected, fully recognized and implemented by the successor State – Canada.

Education

Our Chiefs entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta to improve the education system and to close the gap in the educational outcomes experienced by our First Nations over the years. In 2011, the Chiefs through an Assembly of Treaty Chiefs (AOTC) passed a resolution instructing our Education technicians to develop a First Nation Education Act for Treaties 6, 7 and 8 (Alberta). With the federal government's recent attempt to legislate a First Nation Education Act, our Chiefs have moved forward with assigning a team of experts to draft an Act specifically for our Treaty territories. The Grand Chiefs had attended the "consultation process" to advise that without a government-to-government meeting, the process was not "consultation" and demanded a meeting with the Minister. A meeting has since been held with Minister Valcourt. Work will continue on our own law relating to Education of our peoples, ensuring the Treaty Right to Education and financial sustainability for our students based on our sovereign rights as Indigenous Treaty Nations.

Justice

Our region hosted the National Forum on Community Safety and Ending Violence in April 2013 in conjunction with the Native Women's Association of Canada. Our leadership has taken steps to address issues such as gang violence, drug trafficking and missing/murdered women and girls. Several of our First Nations have taken active measures within their communities to specifically address violence. At a gathering of the Ministers of Aboriginal Affairs and National Aboriginal Leaders Working Group in Winnipeg, the Ministers in attendance supported a motion calling on Canada to conduct an inquiry on murdered and missing women. Our Chiefs have taken the lead in ensuring federal and provincial funding continues for the Aboriginal Community Justice programs.

Health

A majority of our First Nations participate in a co-Management agreement with Health Canada; however, challenges are faced in the changes to services and medication imposed by the federal government. The Chiefs, as directed through a number of Resolutions, have demanded to meet with the Minister of Health; however, no such meeting has taken place in our region, even though the Prime Minister made a commitment at the 2012 Crown - First Nations Gathering that his Ministers would meet with the Chiefs. The Chiefs will continue to call upon the Minister to meet. The Chiefs have also by Resolution instructed a review be conducted on changes to health services and policies done without their consultation.

Water

Our First Nations face serious concerns regarding safe drinking water and water management. Bill S-8, *Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act*, which has now passed into law, will not guarantee the financial sustainability for our First Nations to provide safe drinking water for our communities; many of our First Nations are on boil water alerts. The Chiefs also will not accept the imposition of another government to regulate policies within their First Nations.

Economic Development

While First Nations have taken great strides in the area of economic development, we are still faced with challenges. We have requested a review of the First Nations Gaming Fund, developed from funds derived from the First Nation casinos and shared with First Nations of Treaties 6, 7 and 8 (Alberta). The Government of Alberta had transferred this fund to the Alberta Aboriginal Relations Ministry without the consent of the Chiefs for the disbursement of funds. The Government of Alberta has also denied joint projects in the refinery industry, denying economic growth for those First Nations involved. Recently the Government of Alberta passed Bill-22, *Aboriginal Consultation Levy Bill*, which will impact our First Nations, again without due consultation and accommodation.

Consultation

We fully expect our legal right to be duly consulted and accommodated and as recognized in Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Our leaders take issue with the Government of Canada and particularly the Government of Alberta for their lack of consultation on matters that impact our First Nations and our citizens. First Nations leaders within our regions have filed legal statements of claim against these governments and will continue to challenge within the legal arena and at the international level.

Moving Forward

Indeed we as First Nations are facing many challenges, more than any time in our history, that will have great impact on our future. In our deliberations, our Chiefs have agreed that key to our survival as distinct peoples, as Indigenous peoples, is the education of our own peoples, specifically the education of our youth to fully comprehend our history as Indigenous peoples, as tribes and Nations. We also believe it is equally important to educate non-Indigenous peoples. The face of government has changed; many newcomers to our lands know next to nothing about the rich cultures and traditions of our peoples. To ensure our future, we must share our past. We must develop curriculum for educational institutions. Our Indigenous experts are correct in saying that no student should graduate high school or post-secondary education without full knowledge of the Treaties. Nor should they graduate without learning about the Indian Residential School era, which is a shared part of our history.

Our Chiefs have taken steps forward collectively and within their own First Nations to address the issues before us. We have highlighted but a few that are of priority to our region collectively. Our leadership is developing strategic plans for moving forward in a positive way for the betterment of our peoples. We also extend our hands out to the other regions and First Nations to work together on common issues of concern. We believe strongly in unity and the strength of standing together for our peoples.

Closing

Since the 2012 Annual General Assembly (AGA), we have seen changes; we have been faced with challenges and our Chiefs in Treaties 6, 7 and 8 (Alberta) have joined together along with our advocacy organizations in addressing the changes and challenges.

We look forward to continuing to assemble, to share our concerns, to address issues and to work towards the unity required to be effective in our work. Our Chiefs represent our First Nations and they look to the Assembly of First Nations to advocate and facilitate when called upon.

We extend our sincere best wishes to all Chiefs and Councils, Elders, Veterans and citizens of our First Nations for a better year ahead of us all.

Ishnish.

Regional Chief Cameron Alexis
Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Treaty No. 6 Territory

REGIONAL CHIEF JODY WILSON-RAYBOULD BRITISH COLUMBIA



Elders, Chiefs, delegates, and guests, on behalf of the BC Assembly of First Nations welcome to Whitehorse and the 2013 AFN Annual General Assembly (AGA). Over the past year much has transpired. The rise of “Idle No More” and the call for change is reflected in our AGA’s theme, “Our Nations, Our Rights, Our Future: Empowering Our Citizens to Drive Change”. The AGA provides an opportunity for us to come together, consider the events of the past year, and to plan how, collectively, we can better support and harness the energy of Idle No More as we move forward.

Idle No More has come to mean different things to different people. Within our regions, we experienced it differently. The movement has both challenged Canadians to think critically about Crown-First Nations relations, and at the same time has also challenged us by focusing the lens inwards; to examine the issues and opportunities in our own communities and with our own governments and institutions. Our people at home are demanding more and they are losing patience; not only with how Canada governs over us, but also how the impoverished system of band government under the *Indian Act* is holding many of our Nations back. If Idle No More is to have a lasting influence, achieve tangible results and continue to be an effective movement for social change into the future, the focus of our citizens must continue to shift from simply protesting government (whether it be the federal government or our own governments), to actually undertaking the hard work to rebuild our Nations.

While the tagline, “Idle No More” has represented an effective call to action, many of our people have never, of course, been idle. For these people, perhaps a more appropriate banner could be “patient no more.” Despite the ongoing frustration with the pace of change and the obstacles in shedding the colonial legacy, many of our Nations are experiencing successes – be it socially, economically or politically. There are now over 40 First Nations that are recognized as self-governing outside of the *Indian Act* and dozens more that are responsible for sectoral areas of governance such as lands, financial management or education and creating opportunities for their citizens.

While some of our Nations and their citizens are making progress, the progress is not widespread, not consistent between and among our Nations, or for that matter across regions. Accordingly, far too many of our citizens remain disaffected. This has to change. By working together and tackling the ongoing challenges with other governments and third parties, collaboratively we improve our Nations’ chances of finding success. Our paths forward may be different, but we can work together and demonstrate unity in our purpose – strong and appropriate governance for our Nations, with fair access to our lands and resources.

In January of this year, as our issues catapulted to the forefront of Canadian political debate with flash mobs erupting, hunger strikes taking place and other rallies and events occurring, some of our leadership

agreed to meet with the Prime Minister and his colleagues. As we sat in the Langevin building in the Prime Minister's Office at the January 11 meeting, we could hear the drums outside. I took strength from the drum and even though I knew many of those in the crowd, for their own reasons, opposed the meeting with the Prime Minister, we were united in our deep desire for change. At the meeting, we presented eight Action Items that were set out in an AFN Consensus Document. A few weeks later on January 25th, the BC leadership came together at a BC Chiefs Meeting and endorsed, by way of resolution and declaration, the same Consensus Document.

While the political work with Canada to create the space for our peoples to implement real change is ongoing, we cannot wait for the scales to balance on their own before engaging our citizens. When all is said and done, it is only our own peoples that can truly rebuild our Nations and implement our right of self-government. In recognition of this fact, and in the midst of the momentum at the national level, the BCAFN continues to implement the *Building on OUR Success* action plan which is comprised of four interrelated pillars: 1) *strong and appropriate governance*; 2) *fair land and resource settlements*; 3) *improved education*; and, 4) *individual health*. The action plan seeks to empower, connect and support our Nations as each Nation works to implement its Aboriginal title and rights, including treaty rights. By sharing our stories and experiences, we are developing and providing tools that our Nations can use to chart their own governance path away from governance under the *Indian Act*, toward true self-determination with our citizens as the agents of change.

Under the pillar of **Strong and Appropriate Governance**, the BCAFN has developed and launched the BCAFN Governance Toolkit—*A Guide to Nation Building*. All three parts (Part 1—*The Governance Report*, Part 2—*The Governance Self-Assessment* and Part 3—*A Guide to Community Engagement: Navigating Our Way Through the Post-Colonial Door*) are available at www.bcafn.ca where they can be downloaded in full or in part. Moving forward, I know that this resource has much potential to grow. I am pleased to report that we will launch the second edition of the Governance Report in November, 2013 along with additional community engagement tools.

The BCAFN Governance Toolkit is based on a common understanding that the *Indian Act* is a barrier to our efforts to rebuild our Nations and is the antithesis of 'self-government'. Thus, in addition to the toolkit, at the BCAFN we continue with our work to, "explore options that would facilitate the recognition of our appropriate institutions of governance and the smooth transition from any existing structures that are superseded" (BCAFN Resolution 04/2011). One of our strategies to support the transition of a Nation, or group of Nations, out from under the *Indian Act*, has been to develop much needed and often recommended federal self-government recognition legislation. With the support of then Senator Gerry St. Germain, the BCAFN co-developed Bill S-212: *An Act providing for the recognition of self-governing First Nations of Canada*. This Bill stands in contrast to the legislative initiatives of the federal government that, for the most part, seek to design our post *Indian Act* governance for us. The *First Nations Financial Transparency Act*, *Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act* and the *Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act* are now or soon to be law. These Acts, and others proposed, will affect all First Nations that are governed under the *Indian Act*, namely all those that are not recognized as self-governing. At this point there is no simple mechanism for recognition. Without recognition, the *Indian Act* will continue to apply.

Bill S-212 was introduced on November 1, 2012. Given it was not a government sponsored bill, we anticipated challenges to getting it passed and, unfortunately, it has since fallen off the order paper. Nonetheless, the BCAFN will continue to revise the bill after further input from our Nations and seek to have a new version of the legislation re-introduced in the next parliament.

In May 2013, the BCAFN held a Strategic Dialogue Session among our BC Chiefs. This was not only an opportunity to have a discussion around settling the land question and Canada's approach to negotiating comprehensive claims, but also to have a discussion around Bill S-212 and more broadly around mechanisms to move beyond the *Indian Act*. It is my hope that not only will future dialogue sessions be held in BC but elsewhere across Canada, where there is interest in engaging in discussion on developing mechanisms to move beyond the *Indian Act*.

Under the second BCAFN pillar, **Fair Access to Lands and Resources**, our work to move Canada to reform its comprehensive claims policy, and specifically to build on commitments made by the Prime Minister on January 11, 2013, continue in earnest. We know that many First Nations in BC, and indeed across Canada, understand that fair, just and lasting settlements are not possible under the existing comprehensive claims policy. Since the January 11, 2013 meeting with the Prime Minister, two Senior Oversight Committees (SOC) consisting of representatives of the AFN, the Prime Minister's Office, Privy Council, the Minister's office and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) were created: one to focus on a high-level mechanism on treaty implementation, and the other to look at fair resolution of the land question and, in particular, Canada's comprehensive land claims policy. To date the Comprehensive Claims Policy SOC has met four times. In preparation for the SOC and for our BCAFN Strategic Dialogue Session, a discussion paper was developed which posed questions around Canada's existing policy. My belief is that the questions in this discussion paper will need to be answered and addressed in developing any new federal policy that is to be based on recognition and not extinguishment. For BC First Nations, the policy will require more options for reconciliation that are available to all First Nations, reflecting the current state of the common law, and not limited to the reaching of final agreements through the BC treaty-making process. All things being equal, it is our intention that the work of the Comprehensive Claims SOC will be completed in one year.

Related to the ongoing policy work is the increasing need for our Nations to resolve questions of overlap or shared territory, where more than one Nation claims control over the same territory. In the coming year this issue looks set to dominate a lot of the discussion as we First Nations implement title and rights.

In BC, and indeed elsewhere across the country, activism, and not just that relating to Idle No More, has centered around the proposed exploitation of natural resources and the potential impact on our environment (e.g., Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline, Kinder Morgan Pipeline Expansion, Prosperity Mine, Site C Dam, Shale Gas extraction). While our Nations continue to demand fair access to land and resources to drive our economies and create jobs, our citizens have made it clear this cannot be at the expense of the environment. We face many challenges in responding to the pressures for development, including to what standards proposed developments will be held, where development is acceptable to our Nations, and the basis upon which revenues will be shared.

To help organize our response to proposed development and to inform the activities of the BCAFN with respect to title and rights generally, at the June 2012 BCAFN Special Chiefs' Assembly, the Chiefs adopted a comprehensive BCAFN Legal/Political Strategy. In accordance with this strategy, our leadership has most recently been considering the important Tsilhqot'in title and rights case that is to be heard by the Supreme Court of Canada this November. I am pleased that the AFN has applied to intervene in this important case and happy that the Tsilhqot'in are here in Whitehorse to discuss their appeal. The outcome of this case will have ramifications for all First Nations across the country.

With respect to **Improved Education**, there is a great deal of work underway in our region to support better education outcomes and the early results are encouraging. Through agreements such as the BC Tri-partite Education Agreement, we are achieving much, in the area of education with great potential which has yet to be fully realized. In BC, we are very fortunate to have organizations like the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNEC) and the First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) that are leading this work.

Unfortunately, the federal government's current legislative agenda regarding First Nations education could threaten the progress that our region has already made. Federal legislation on education, if not optional and not respectful of our approach in BC, would be highly problematic. Accordingly, it is our intention in BC to ensure that our region's views on education are not only listened to, but acted upon, and that the drafting of any national sectoral education legislation involves our Nations, and does not in any way compromise our vision for self-government and First Nation control of First Nation Education.

Through their position paper titled, "The British Columbia First Nations Education System and the proposed National First Nations Education Legislation", FNEC and FNSA have sought to engage AANDC on the concerns of BC First Nations around the consultation process for First Nations education legislation. We have yet to receive notice on the next phase of the process, including clarification on whether the proposed legislation would be "opt-in" or if the legislation will be co-authored with First Nations. Both elements are necessary for a process that is acceptable to our Nations.

In the area of **Individual Health**, work continues on our ambitious BC Health Initiative which will see the BC First Nations Health Authority replace Health Canada for the provision of health services to our people in BC. The BC First Nations Health Council (FNHC), the political body that is overseeing the transition, announced in May a significant milestone in the initiative, namely the signing of the Canada Funding Agreement. Through this funding agreement, Health Canada will fund the First Nations Health Authority for the next 10 years. The transfer of health services is scheduled to take place on October 1, 2013. This exciting initiative provides the opportunity for our Nations to deliver more efficient and culturally-appropriate services to our citizens than Health Canada. However, our Nations must, of course, be sure that the respective responsibilities of all the parties to the transfer are clear and understood, and that the financial resources are there to provide the programs and services our people expect and deserve. Consequently, and notwithstanding the general support for the transfer, there have been some concerns regarding the timeline of the transfer and getting all the work done that needs to be completed by then. On a 'lighter' note, the FNHC has initiated a 'Beefy Chiefs' challenge to our leadership to focus on healthy living and losing weight. Many of our leaders have taken up the challenge to improve their individual health, are having tremendous success and are encouraging others to get involved.

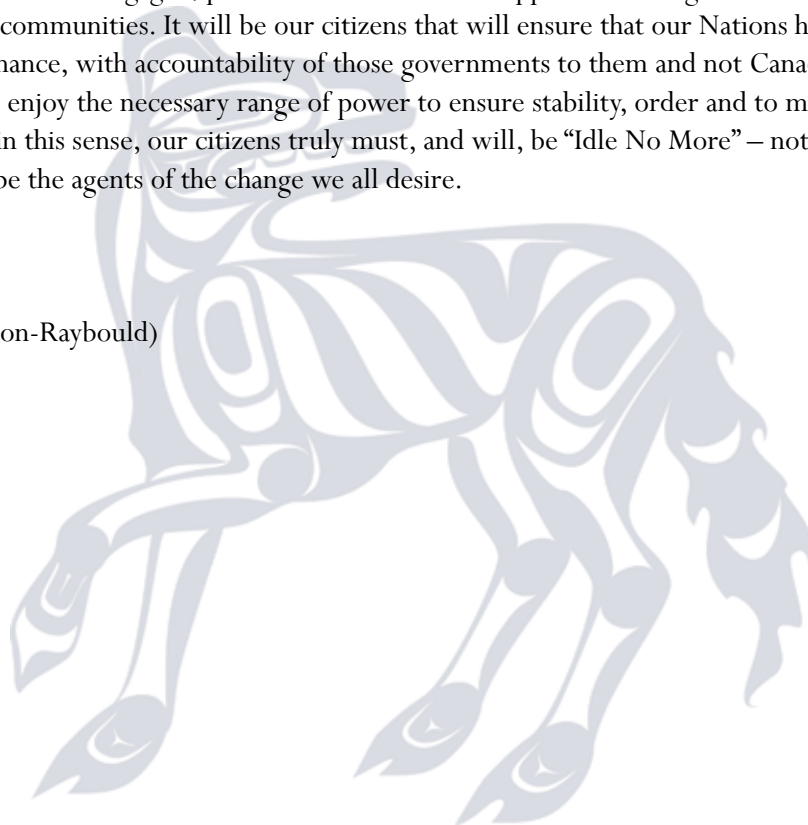
Looking forward to the year ahead, there is much to do, both regionally and nationally, to support our Nations. Unfortunately, despite having clear solutions and all the good work that is ongoing, Canada is pushing ahead with its own legislative agenda. Our hand is also being forced as Canada imposes funding cuts to our organizations, underfunds programs and services in comparison to what is spent on other Canadians, and then, when determining funding levels, looks to impose ill-conceived approaches to offsetting transfers by our own source revenues. Instead of designing our post-*Indian Act* world for us, Canada should be stepping aside and helping to create the space for us to do it ourselves, which necessarily must include developing a new fiscal relationship.

Faced with Canada's current fiscal and legislative agenda, we need to maintain the pressure on Canada and build on the commitments made by the Prime Minister on January 11, 2013. There is the need, once and for all, to deal with implementing the original treaty relationship for those Nations with treaties and to deal with the comprehensive claims process and work towards settling the land question for those Nations that do not have treaties. The best way to do this is to provide solutions developed by First Nations that cannot be ignored. As leaders we know that maintaining pressure on the federal government is very difficult without the support of our citizens, and that it requires great tenacity; often returning and staying at tables where power dynamics and capacity may appear skewed in favour of the Crown, and where the burden seems always to be ours in educating government officials. Nevertheless, and however challenging, this work is necessary.

As chiefs across this country, we are all united by our desire to build a strong, healthy post-colonial reality for our citizens and our Nations. With this in mind, historic treaty or modern treaty, or no treaty, at some point, ultimately, our efforts come together and our work of Nation building becomes one and the same. It will be, I feel, our citizens that ultimately bring us all to this inevitable conclusion as they increasingly become more engaged, proactive and direct and support the change that is actually needed on the ground in our communities. It will be our citizens that will ensure that our Nations have strong and appropriate governance, with accountability of those governments to them and not Canada, and where their governments enjoy the necessary range of power to ensure stability, order and to maximize our opportunities. So in this sense, our citizens truly must, and will, be "Idle No More" – not simply to protest for change but to be the agents of the change we all desire.

Gilakas'la.

Puglaas (Jody Wilson-Raybould)



REGIONAL CHIEF MIKE SMITH YUKON

On behalf of Yukon First Nations, I wish each and every one of you a warm welcome to our homeland. It has been 21 years since the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) last held an assembly in the Yukon. I offer thanks to former Yukon Regional Chief Eric Morris, who on behalf of Yukon First Nations, succeeded in bringing the Annual General Assembly (AGA) here.

This year marks some important historical dates, including the 250th anniversary of the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the recognition and beginning of Yukon Land Claim negotiations, and the 20th anniversary celebrations of the signing of the first Land Claims and Self-Government Agreements with four Yukon First Nations – Champagne and Aishihik First Nation, Teslin Tlingit Council, First Nation of Na-cho Nyak Dun, and Vuntut Gwichin First Nation. The AGA provides a unique opportunity for us to share these successes with First Nations from across the country.

I am pleased to provide you with a report on the work and priorities of Yukon First Nations (YFN) in advancing our agreements to provide a better future for our people and governance of our lands and resources.

YFN Chiefs and officials have held many meetings with the governments of Canada and Yukon on issues that affect our people and lands. Meetings have focused on resource revenue sharing with Canada and Yukon, financial transfer negotiations, taxation, formula financing, own source revenues, education and child welfare services, and other matters of interest to our First Nations.

For purposes of this report, it is necessary to provide a brief background on our agreements and current status of our First Nations. We have First Nations that have not settled their claims and are in court challenging the right of the Crown to allow development on their lands without consultation and settlement of their claims. These First Nations remain under jurisdiction of the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and, as such, will be impacted by unilateral amendments to the *Indian Act* and other legislation in areas such as accountability and transparency, matrimonial real property, etc. Meanwhile, the YFN that have settled Self-Government Agreements are no longer *Indian Act* bands and therefore are not impacted since the *Act* does not apply (with the exception of registration for Indian status). As with other First Nations across Canada, our First Nations are in constant conflict with governments over resource development, including pipelines, hydro development and encroachment without meaningful consultation and accommodation.

Under Chapter 23 of the respective First Nations Final Agreements, it was agreed that Yukon would opt to share in the royalties collected by Canada, and that Yukon would negotiate on behalf of Yukon First Nations. Eleven YFN are reviewing the proposed resource revenue sharing agreement with the Yukon government. The YFN share is 15% of the Yukon's share, which is 50% of all royalties once Yukon opts into the resource revenue share with Canada (the agreement between Canada and Yukon is a 50 -50 split). However this amount is further qualified to 12% for 11 First Nations, with 3% held back by Yukon since there are three First Nations that have not settled their claim. The difficulty is how this amount will be allocated among the

11 Self-Governing First Nations. In addition there is an important legal issue on encumbering rights, which may lead to a legal challenge to the existing resource right sharing under the Final Agreement.

Under the Self-Government Agreements, Canada had agreed to negotiate Financial Transfer Agreements with each YFN every five years to cover funding of governance and programs. Without amending the agreement, Canada has adopted a new policy to ignore the provision to negotiate and instead force the First Nations to accept interim fiscal arrangements, which will lead to formula financing once consultation is completed. Despite our resistance to the unilateral change, YFN have continued to lobby to retain fiscal negotiations as set out in the agreements signed with Canada.

The road to full self-government, in assuming full control over education, family and children, and other matters under the Self-Government Agreements, has been met with opposition by both Canada and Yukon to change the status quo. Through devolution of responsibilities from Canada, the administration of services to First Nation citizens remains with the Yukon, despite many attempts to the contrary by Yukon First Nations. Yukon receives funding from Canada on behalf of our First Nations. For example, when Canada allocated funding for Housing for First Nations, Yukon lobbied and received \$50 million. Following allocation to Yukon First Nations, the Yukon kept \$17.3 million for its own purposes. It has been 20 some years since the signing of these agreements, yet not one program under the Yukon has been devolved to a First Nation.

An important undertaking by Yukon First Nations involves developing a central land registry system for settlement land held by the First Nations. Under the Final Agreements, Yukon First Nations retained full Section 35 rights under the *Constitution* on settlement lands, and partial extinguishment of Aboriginal rights off settlement lands. Under the Final Agreement, Settlement Land is owned by each First Nation as “equivalent to fee simple” but subject to “encumbering rights”. The problem is those rights cannot be postponed in favour of the Leasehold Title Holder. Therefore in developing a Land Titles Act and Registry, providing for land management presents many challenges to First Nations, if First Nations want to develop and lease parcels of their Settlement Land without extinguishing their Aboriginal Title.

In summary, after some 20 years of living with these so-called modern treaties, it seems we must continue moving forward in the steps taken some 40 years ago by Yukon First Nations – the negotiations with governments, it appears, will never end.

In closing, I again want to take this opportunity to welcome you all to Whitehorse and to reiterate that Yukon First Nations are honoured to host the 2013 AGA. I look forward to productive discussion during the Assembly and encourage you to participate in the social and cultural events taking place throughout the week to experience our rich culture and heritage.

Regional Chief Mike Smith

REGIONAL CHIEF BILL ERASMUS NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

There are many issues that are before the Dene of the Northwest Territories. It has been another difficult year with the territorial government challenging and competing for authority and control over our lands, revenues, water and resources. However we must continue to support our communities that are enacting their Treaties and self-government agreements or still in the process of discussing new arrangements with the Crown. We have a unique relationship with the Crown based on Treaties 8 & 11 which includes certain legal rights and interests. Canada is legally obligated to provide financial security to our nations by virtue of the *Constitution Act, 1982* and that will continue into the future.



We know the present suite of federal legislation is a direct violation on our treaty and Aboriginal rights and it is our responsibility to prevent the legislation from infringing or adversely affecting our people. We must continue to focus and stick to our own agenda as our peoples have done before us. During this experience, we must insist that the Crown prove that they have the authority to pass legislation “in regards to Indians”.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The Dene Nation hosted its 43rd Dene National Assembly in the community of Inuvik. The community did an excellent job in hosting this event coordinated by Chief Herbert Blake Jr. We thank the many volunteers who worked tirelessly to raise funds for this event. A special thanks to the Gwichin Nation for a warm welcome into their region and territory.

Royal Proclamation of 1763

This year is the 250th anniversary of the Royal Proclamation of 1763. The Royal Proclamation is widely regarded as having been one of the cardinal steps in the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in British North America, which eventually became Canada and beyond.

A quarter of a millennium later it is our responsibility to ensure that the Royal Proclamation is implemented and enforced. It is part of the *Constitution Act, 1982* and must continue to be enshrined as a document that lives today.

Proposed Devolution of Lands and Resources and Water in the Northwest Territories

Devolution is the proposed transfer of authority from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) with some financing to First Nations. The proposed Devolution Final Agreement between the federal and territorial government is now in process. A formal consultation process is underway regarding the agreement of Northwest Territories public lands and resources and

rights in respect to water from the Government of Canada to the GNWT. The agreement is a one-time \$23 million grant to the GNWT to cover the transition of powers, as well as a \$4 million grant to Aboriginal governments for transitional expenses they may incur. The agreement is an annual transfer to the NWT to cover the costs of administering oil, gas, land, water and other resources. That transfer would amount to just over \$65.3 million a year, which is roughly how much the federal government currently spends to perform those same functions. At the same time, the agreement would reduce the federal governments operating grant to the territory by 50 cents for every dollar in resource revenues the territorial government earns. In our view, the agreement will not serve to make the NWT more financially independent from Ottawa.

Some regions within the Dene Nation chose to participate in devolution discussions while others have not and this is their choice. The main thing is that we stick together as Dene and provide for our people based on our original agreements with the Crown. We know that these talks began in 1988 (as a Northern Accord) and cannot conclude until every community consents to it.

Possible Hydraulic Fracturing “Fracking” in the North

There are a number of plans to move forward on exploration in crude oil and natural gas in the North. While it is in the early stages, there is speculation that the central Mackenzie Valley is a rich resource that could produce significant yield using controversial drilling and fracturing practices. Hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as “fracking,” is a controversial drilling process used to extract natural gas or oil from shale, coal beds and “tight sands” with vertical and horizontal drilling. Sand, water and chemicals are blasted at high pressure to fracture rock where natural gas is trapped. Communities all over Canada, the U.S. and other countries are fighting against fracking because it pollutes water and harms human health. Fracking is extremely water intensive and requires approximately 2 million to 9 million gallons of water per fracking job. This method of natural gas extraction also uses dangerous chemicals. For example, a four billion gallon fracking project requires approximately 80 tonnes (200,000 gallons) of chemicals. Contaminated fracking water, laced with these chemicals, can leach into local water supplies. In British Columbia First Nation leaders have rallied against the provincial government on the approval of water licenses that will allow the annual removal of up to 7.3 billion litres of water for fracking each well. While some municipalities are imposing bans or halting fracking projects, Quebec is the only province in Canada that has implemented a limited moratorium; the Dene Nation passed a motion to do the same in the North.

Mackenzie River Basin at Risk Due to Climate Change

The Mackenzie River Basin is at risk from a warming climate and pressures from new resource development, according to new research released by a panel of scientists at the Rosenberg International Forum on Water Policy. The basin’s network of rivers, tributaries and boreal forest spans three provinces and two territories. While the report says it is relatively undisturbed ecologically, it’s poorly monitored. The Mackenzie River Basin stretches over three provinces and two territories. The basin is among the most intact large-scale ecosystems in North America, and the Mackenzie River is the largest north-flowing river in North America. The headwaters are glaciers, so when the environment warms up, we see changes. For example, we see collapses of the black spruce forest in the southern N.W.T., along with changes in the flooding regimes and glacial ecosystems. The tar sands south of us continue to be another big threat to our territory, as well as other mining activities. These large forces of change threaten the ecological integrity of

the basin, its capacity to provide important environmental services, and its role as homeland to the Dene who rely on the land and its resources to provide food, security, clothing, water and other necessities of life.

Support for Beaver Lake Cree First Nation

The Dene Nation fully supports the Beaver Lake Cree First Nation, a small First Nation in northeast Alberta that was victorious in making headway for a trial against the energy industry. The First Nation wants to know if its Treaty rights are being violated by the cumulative effects of the tar sands development. They are also taking into consideration industrial development impacts from the mining and forestry sectors. The Beaver Lake Cree would like to seek compensation for imposition by these large projects on their hunting, trapping and fishing rights. The Beaver Lake Cree First Nation wants more limits on the development of the tar sands and more management control over these violations. As you know, we are downstream from the tar sands and also feel the effects from Alberta's tar sands development.

Dene Nation Supports Court Challenge

On September 9, 2012, Barrett Lenoir, a member of Liidlü Kue First Nation in Treaty #11 Territory, was stopped near the community of Behchoko by a GNWT Environment and Natural Resources Officer who stated "he needed a permit for transporting personal harvested wood". Mr. Lenoir was subsequently charged under the GNWT Forest Management Act. The Dene Nation supports Mr. Lenoir because the GNWT has no legal authority to charge him while he is engaged in traditional activities in his treaty territory. It is unfortunate that legal action is necessary because we already proved that we are the land owners in the *Paulette* case in 1973, which is also supported by the *Constitutional Act, 1982*. We are very concerned because the GNWT is trying to exercise authority where they have no jurisdiction. The *Paulette* case established that Treaties 8 & 11 are peace and friendship instruments between the Dene and Great Britain. All GNWT and federal acts, regulations and policies should have been changed to reflect this landmark decision by Judge William Morrow at that time. Forty years later, status Indian members like Mr. Lenoir are being charged, harassed and intimidated – this has to stop.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

It is important for all First Nations in Canada to work together to have a strong AFN political organization. Collectively the AFN must work for our communities while we continue to pursue self-determination and express our sovereignty as the Supreme Court of Canada has outlined. Our Elders are telling us to be strong and to be more aggressive and to be a collective. This is important now with a majority federal government that feels they have a mandate to do as they wish. However, we know that regardless of what party makes up the government, by law, the special relationship based on our legal foundation must continue. In other words, regardless of who the Prime Minister is, our people have to be treated with respect as nations and allies of the Crown. This is what needs to be worked on and understood. We have to make clear progress from the January 11, 2013 meeting between First Nation Leaders and the Crown. At this meeting, Prime Minister Harper agreed to be "hands on" when it comes to dealing with Treaty issues including Comprehensive Claims.

And finally, we thank our leadership and staff in our communities and territories for their hard work and efforts. We cannot move forward as a strong nation unless we are organized at all levels. Thanks to Dene Nation, and all the other Nations on Turtle Island and AFN staff for their contributions throughout the year, where they have shown consistent commitment and hard work. We wish you all the best in your respective communities and regions, and encourage you to enjoy the northern hospitality of the Yukon First Nations on whose territory we gather.

For more information on issues in our territory, please go to www.denenation.com.

Regional Chief Bill Erasmus



AFN ELDERS COUNCIL

Since the inception of the National Indian Brotherhood/Assembly of First Nations, there has always been a place of honour and distinction for the Elders. Elders provided both spiritual and political guidance in the formation of the organization, its structures and its Charter. The Elders helped to shape AFN policies and the relationship with the federal government and other national and international organizations. During the past 34 years, the AFN's leadership has relied upon the historical and cultural knowledge of its Elders, especially in matters relating to Treaty rights and First Nation governance.

This role continues today. The AFN Elders Council includes representatives from each of AFN's 10 regions, as well as two Resident Elders appointed by the National Chief. The Elders Council continues to play an important role in all facets of the AFN and its daily operations.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN Elders Council continues to meet bi-annually at Annual General Assemblies and Special Chiefs Assemblies to discuss issues and challenges facing the Council and to bring together new ideas.

Resident Elders Barney Taa-eee-sim-chilth Williams of Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations and Bertha Commonda of Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation provided guidance and shared knowledge at meetings and gatherings throughout the year. Sadly, Elder Commonda returned to the spirit world on May 17, 2013. A mother, grandmother and teacher, Elder Commonda was a strong advocate for education as a foundation for success. Her commitment and dedication to her language and culture was a driving force and made a tremendous contribution to our work as a national organization. Her contributions to her community, and to all First Nations across the country will live on through all of our work as guided by her wisdom and vision for a better day for First Nations.

The AFN Elders Council is imperative in the day-to-day business of our lives. They are the keepers of our traditions, values, languages and history. Elders are our guides to our future. They are leaders in our community; they speak with honour and with a great deal of pride. Elders are our teachers. The Elders will always encourage First Nation leaders and champions to continue to enlighten and inform forums such as the Chiefs Assemblies on their experiences, issues, successes and challenges. It is all of our responsibilities to ensure prosperity and the safety of the little ones, just as our ancestors did for us. The AFN continues efforts to acquire funds to fully integrate the input and participation of the Elders Council into all work.

AFN Elders Council Guidelines and Protocols

The Elders Council continues to meet at Assemblies to discuss and review the "Assembly of First Nations Elders and Elders Council Guidelines and Protocols".

AFN Tri-Council

The Elders Council continues to provide guidance and vision to AFN Tri-Council meetings with the Women's and Youth Councils.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- The Elders Council will continue to seek additional financial support from the federal government and alternative sources, to ensure First Nations cultures and perspectives are reflected in the work conducted regionally and nationally. AFN staff will continue to provide administrative support, and champion the issues as directed by the Elders Council.
- The Elders Council will continue to support the activities of the Tri-Council.



AFN WOMEN'S COUNCIL

The Women's Council works with the AFN Secretariats to ensure that the concerns and perspectives of First Nations women inform the work of the AFN. Council members hold portfolio responsibilities and carry out work for the AFN, including participation in a wide range of panels, presentations and forums that are relevant to First Nations women.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The Chairs have been actively engaged in various meetings and activities that address matters of concern to First Nations women and their families. The Council Chair and Co-Chair participate on the Executive Committee, and as such, have kept the Council apprised of Executive activities and discussions. Also, the Chair has been participating in monthly calls with the Youth and Elders Councils' Chairs, and the Chief Executive Officer, as a way to establish improved communication between the AFN Secretariat and the Tri-Council.

The Women's Council participated in a number of activities aimed at raising awareness of and preventing violence against Indigenous women and girls, furthering Resolution 01/2012, including October 4, 2012 which Chiefs had declared a National Day of Remembrance, and October 18, 2012, declared a National Day of Action. The Council Chair attended the 57th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, which focused on "Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls". The Chair had the opportunity to learn about successful initiatives that are taking place around the world. One of the key topics was the important role men play in effectively addressing this issue. This resonates with First Nations as it is imperative that men embrace their traditional role in First Nation families. In addition, the Chair was encouraged by the Commission's adoption of the following resolution put forward by the International Indigenous Women's Forum:

"The Commission reaffirms that indigenous women often suffer multiple forms of discrimination and poverty which increase their vulnerability to all forms of violence; and stresses the need to seriously address violence against indigenous women and girls."

This recognition is a positive step towards increasing international awareness and pressure on Canada, to be accountable and prompted to address this issue.

Some Council members attended the National Forum on Community Safety and Ending Violence, last April in Edmonton. Forum delegates engaged in meaningful dialogue on best practices as well as current needs and challenges faced by community members and victims' families. In addition, the forum provided a space for participants to put forth recommendations to end violence against and among Indigenous peoples.

In addition to the above mentioned initiatives, the Tri-Council Chairs have been pursuing activities to support implementation of Resolutions 01/2012: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2012 and 02/2012: Fully Supporting the Role of the AFN Tri-Council.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- The Council is highly committed to supporting the development and implementation of the National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls.
- The Council will be working on ways to support the development of a collaborative initiative to promote and mentor young First Nation women to prepare them for leadership.
- The Council will also continue to work with the Youth and Elders Councils to continue to implement Resolution 02/2012 as well as the Tri-Council Strategic Plan.



AFN NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

The AFN National Youth Council (AFN NYC) operates as a 20-member council representing First Nations youth from each of the 10 AFN regions (each region has one male and one female representative). This national body represents First Nations youth across the country on issues that impact them on a daily basis. The NYC provides insight to the AFN committees and working groups, as well as the AFN secretariat on various youth related issues.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Partnership Development

The AFN NYC continues to establish partnerships that will enhance their reach in addressing issues impacting our young people through a more holistic approach. Over the past year the Council has been advancing a national joint initiative that involves national youth serving organizations and national Aboriginal organizations, who seek to work together on improving services for Indigenous youth and making sure that the voices of Indigenous youth are heard widely, not just within their respective organizations. The initiative is also looking to move forward on creating networks and collaboration around the needs and goals of Indigenous children and youth.

Health and Wellness

The AFN NYC continues to collaborate closely with the AFN Secretariat on a number of activities related to health and wellness. Key areas of focus for this past year have been in mental wellness and sports and recreation.

The AFN NYC participated in the Feathers of Hope conference, which took place in Thunder Bay, Ontario. The conference focused on youth suicide prevention and mental health.

The AFN NYC also participated in the delivery of a presentation to the 2013 National Aboriginal Physical Activity Conference that included a review of the IndigenACTION Report and explored next steps. The NYC continues to seek opportunities at national, regional and community levels to advocate in the areas of obesity, chronic diseases and the importance of physical activity.

Social Development

The AFN NYC has been actively involved with social development issues. The NYC continues to seek innovative and effective approaches that will help First Nations youth find alternative sources for financial sustainability other than income assistance.

The AFN NYC also participated in activities and meetings that dealt with adult and child care. One of these activities involved partnering with the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society and the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth (Ontario) in the making of “Letters to Canada”, a video which involved young people raising awareness about the inequities faced by First Nations children and youth.

Members of the AFN NYC also took part in the development of the “Living a Life of Integrity” video, which brings the conversations of eight Indigenous men into a collection of messages on love, respect and honour. The goal of the video was to assist in overcoming violence and creating change.

Youth Summit

While there have been delays in delivery of the National Youth Summit and providing a forum for First Nations youth to discuss important issues and priorities, the AFN NYC and its partners remain dedicated to providing youth with this much needed opportunity. Planning is once again underway and the National Youth Summit is on track to take place in Saskatoon this fall.

Tri-Council

Guided by Resolution 02/2012 the AFN NYC continues to work with the Elders and Women’s Councils, through a Tri-Council approach, to identify opportunities for increased involvement in Secretariat activities and to provide an effective voice in determining AFN priorities and ways to collectively address key issues.

Forums and Gatherings

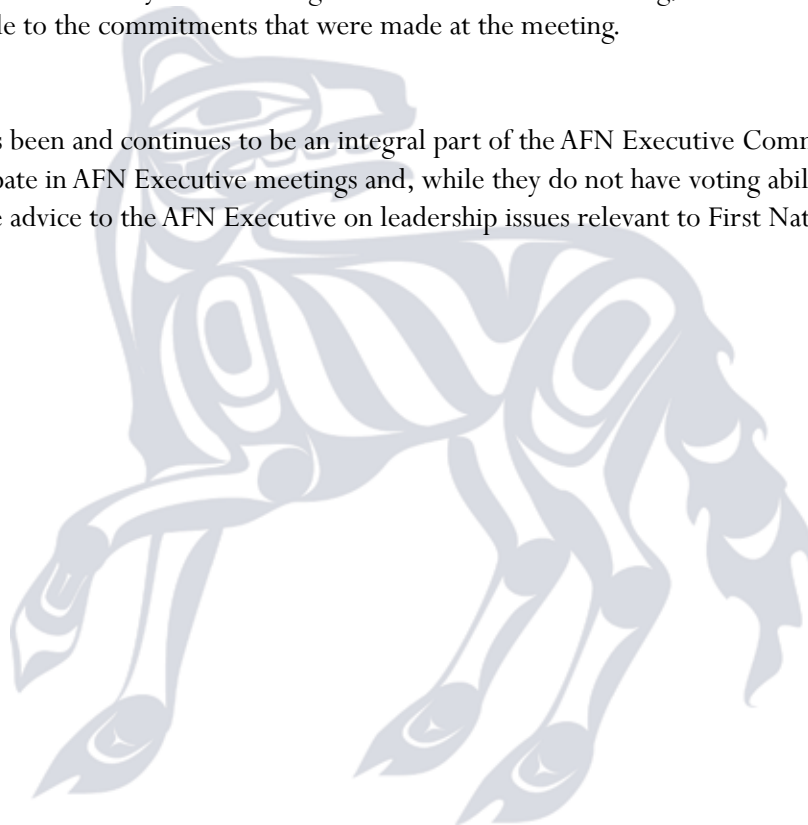
Throughout the last year the AFN NYC was represented at a number of national forums and gatherings dealing with subject matter, including but not limited to education, Treaties, community violence, and public health.

January 11

AFN NYC representatives participated in the meeting between First Nation leadership and the Prime Minister and federal representatives on January 11, 2013. The NYC felt it was extremely important for young people to be present to hear the dialogue, to communicate what was heard at this meeting to First Nation youth across the country and following the conclusion of the meeting, hold the Government of Canada accountable to the commitments that were made at the meeting.

AFN Executive

The AFN NYC has been and continues to be an integral part of the AFN Executive Committee. The NYC Co-Chairs participate in AFN Executive meetings and, while they do not have voting ability at the Executive table, they provide advice to the AFN Executive on leadership issues relevant to First Nation youth.



NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Successful delivery of the 4th National First Nation Youth Summit resulting in the development of a new five-year action plan that addresses First Nation youth issues.
- Continued efforts to solidify meaningful and effective involvement in the ongoing work of the AFN Secretariat.
- Advancement of the recommendations stemming from the IndigenACTION roundtables and report, as well as efforts to develop healthier First Nation communities.
- Continued dialogue with the other members of the AFN Tri-Council and initiate work toward the development of an annual workplan.
- Work to secure sustainable funding for youth activities from sources other than government.
- Heighten awareness and public visibility of the AFN NYC.
- Enhance the work that has been done previously on toolkits and interactive tools which are designed to assist First Nation youth.
- Continue to improve accountability and transparency at the AFN NYC table.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



I am very pleased to present my first annual report as Chief Executive Officer of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to the 34th Annual General Assembly (AGA). I would like to begin by thanking Richard Jock for his leadership and contribution as former Chief Executive Officer during a crucial time of renewal for the AFN.

As with all First Nation organizations, the AFN is faced with an increasingly difficult fiscal environment, with an overall decline in funding levels and further funding decreases on the horizon. At the same time, we are dealing with a complex policy and political context which means that we need to remain vigilant and agile in our efforts to respond to a myriad of long-standing and emerging issues in support of First Nations.

We have taken a number of measures to improve the AFN, including reorganizing its internal structure to be more effective. We also continue to seek efficiencies, as we are tasked to do more with less funding. Moving to a new, smaller office space will result in significant cost savings for the organization. In addition, the new location is much better suited to working in a collaborative way. We also continue to explore ways to ensure that Regional Chiefs and the Tri-Council can engage more directly and effectively to support ongoing work.

The AFN has remained very active in areas of vital interest to First Nations, reflecting the breadth of our mandates received by way of resolution. As throughout our history, the AFN, as an advocacy organization, has core functions relating to communications, parliamentary and intergovernmental advocacy, facilitating assemblies, liaising with and supporting First Nations governments in their advocacy efforts, and ensuring efficient management of information and our resources through sustainability initiatives and fundraising. In relation to each of our functions, we are continually looking for opportunities to enhance our efforts. Throughout this past year we have moved to expand communications through regular teleconferences with all organizations, through monthly information distributions and through enhanced use of video technology. We look to expand these efforts and to enhance web service and utilization of social media in the upcoming year.

In the area of Parliamentary Advocacy, we have implemented a weekly update of all parliamentary activity and provide enhanced monitoring of all Committees with all information posted to the homepage of our website on a weekly basis. We continue to provide updates and analysis to First Nations leaders and technicians and provide support for delegations while in Ottawa. We have engaged on every matter before Parliament affecting First Nation interests through direct advocacy for First Nations inherent and Treaty rights and jurisdiction and actively opposing threats from unilateral federal legislation. Through this advocacy the AFN has also continued to advance a proactive agenda for change, as mandated by resolution on key priorities including education, Treaty implementation and fundamental policy reforms on

comprehensive claims, resource revenue sharing and ending violence against women, among others. This effort includes follow-up to commitments from the meeting with the Prime Minister and members of the Federal Cabinet on January 11, 2013 and the Crown-First Nations Gathering in January 2012.

Organizing and preparing for assemblies and national meetings remains a core activity as this is the mandating and reporting aspect of all of our efforts. Over the years we have seen many improvements to resolution processes and facilitation of meetings to ensure we maximize the opportunity to gather as Nations and ensure we provide value to all First Nations governments attending. Above all we are directed to provide the forum for First Nations leadership to deliberate and to advance priorities and strategies for action and we will continue to strive to improve assemblies with this in mind. I look forward to your feedback from this AGA and to working with you to ensure we are constantly improving.

With regard to maximizing our resources, as referenced at the outset, we have undertaken significant efforts to ensure our sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness. We also strive to advance our accountability to all First Nations governments through full reporting on all resolutions on a bi-annual basis, through tracking of all documents and timely response on all correspondence, to new efforts to streamline and to look to new ways to fundraise based on your direction, including advancing the First Nations Rights Fund as a central vehicle to support critical court challenges and other efforts integral to our rights, treaties and jurisdiction.

I would like to thank the National Chief and Executive Committee, as well as the Chiefs-in-Assembly, for their commitment and leadership. I look forward to your direction and a successful Annual General Assembly.

Peter Dinsdale
A/Chief Executive Officer

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY AND ACTIVITY

The Chiefs-in-Assembly have directed Assembly of First Nations (AFN) engagement in international activities and mechanisms to advance First Nations rights. Therefore, the AFN is required to have an international dimension to its advocacy and activities. The AFN advances the rights and interests of First Nations internationally by: strategically participating in key international fora and events; forging relationships and partnerships with other Indigenous peoples and their organizations and human rights non-governmental organizations (NGOs); facilitating international political, economic, cultural, and social relationships between First Nations and foreign States; and, seeking to establish working relationships with Canada towards informing their foreign and international policy approaches and objectives on matters of shared interest

Strategic Objectives

1. Promote First Nations Rights and Interests in International Standard Setting

- Assert the “inherent and treaty affirmed” nature of First Nation rights at the international level to ensure that the many initiatives underway geared to new international standards being developed or law being updated on a variety of matters are informed by First Nation perspectives and realities in Canada.
- Assert the incorporation and implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in domestic and international standard setting activities.
- Assert the key connection between First Nations rights and interests to their relationship to the land so that all related issues including resources, water, forestry, environment, and governance are captured to enable and enhance advocacy interests and requirements.

2. Relationships and Partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights NGOs

- Establishing alliances and promoting consensus approaches to enhance and strengthen First Nations rights and positions through outreach efforts.
- Accessing networking, communications and capacities that First Nations need to enhance success in their advocacy.
- Educating and creating awareness among targeted audiences and the general population.
- Share and transfer knowledge, expertise and experiences with other Indigenous peoples globally and their organizations to help their capacity development.

3. Facilitating First Nations and Foreign State Relations

- Actively promote and facilitate direct relationships on the basis of mutual sovereignty.
- Educate foreign governments and their peoples about First Nation peoples.
- Actively promote trade and commercial relationships to enable economic development in First Nation communities.
- Actively promote and facilitate cultural and social relationships between First Nations and foreign states to enable capacity development in First Nation communities on matters of known expertise of a foreign State.

4. Engaging with Canada

- Achieve disclosure on Canada's interests, intentions and activities regarding international matters.
- Secure resources to undertake research, engagement with First Nations constituency and development of advocacy positions.
- Influence Canada's contributions to discussion and their negotiating positions.
- Secure resources for participation in the international events, including on-delegation opportunities to maximize effectiveness and monitor Canada's activities and statements.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN and National Chief have been actively advocating the implementation of the Declaration in communications with the federal government and other governments, with the private sector and with Canadians in general. More specifically, the advocacy regarding the implementation of the Declaration is captured in policy discussions with federal officials and in appearances on Parliament Hill regarding various legislative and policy studies.

12th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The Permanent Forum was established by United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution 2000/22 on July 28, 2000. In this resolution, the UNPFII was given a mandate to “discuss Indigenous issues within the mandate of the Council relating to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights”. To substantiate this work, the Permanent Forum was called upon to provide expert advice and recommendations on Indigenous issues to the UN system through ECOSOC; raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of relevant activities within the UN system; and prepare and disseminate information on Indigenous issues.

Furthermore, Article 42 of the UNDRIP states:

The United Nations, its bodies, including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and specialized agencies, including at the country level, and States shall promote respect for and full application of the provisions of the Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration.

The annual sessions offer an opportunity for the AFN to share information with the UN and other NGOs on First Nations issues and to continue to raise awareness about Canada's laws, policies and activities on priority issues affecting First Nations. In addition, these sessions provide an opportunity for the AFN to advance recommendations in dealing with the issues examined and debated especially in the context of implementation of the UNDRIP.

The 12th session was held in New York from May 20-31, 2013. The special theme for the 12th Session was the Review Year. Deliberations placed special emphasis on the implementation of the Permanent Forum's recommendations on health, education and culture. In addition, the 12th session addressed the inclusion of Indigenous peoples in the United Nations post-2015 development agenda. The discussion focused on the establishment of a process to advance a development agenda that considers the poverty and well-being of Indigenous peoples and the need to adopt a new partnership for development – built on the human rights-based approach.

National Chief Atleo attended and presented a Statement regarding item 7, “Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”. The National Chief spoke to the issues of recognition of rights, reconciliation, and supporting a study on developing an international mechanism to implement UNDRIP.

World Conference on Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations General Assembly decided, through resolution 65/198 of December 21, 2010, to organize a high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly in 2014, to be known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. The WCIP will be held on September 22-23, 2014. The main objective of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples is to share perspectives and best practices on the realization of the rights of Indigenous peoples and to pursue the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The Sami Parliament of Norway hosted an Indigenous preparatory conference for the World Conference in Alta, Norway in June 2013, to consolidate Indigenous peoples’ strategies and positions for the World Conference. The AFN had senior staff participate in this conference. This initiative has been welcomed by Indigenous peoples and the United Nations system. Indigenous peoples have established a global coordinating group for the World Conference (GCG), comprising Indigenous representatives from each of the seven Indigenous regions (Africa, Arctic, Asia, Latin America, North America, Pacific and Russia), and representatives of Indigenous women and youth. John Henrickson, member of the Sami Parliament was appointed as the Indigenous peoples’ focal-point/facilitator in this process.

Resolution 65/198 invites the President of the General Assembly to conduct open-ended consultations with Member States and with representatives of Indigenous peoples within the framework of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, as well as the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in order to determine the modalities for the meeting, including the participation of Indigenous peoples in the Conference.

At the request of the President of the UN General Assembly, Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, Ambassador de Alba (Mexico) and John Henrickson carried out consultations with Member States and Indigenous Peoples from April - September 2012, on a possible modalities resolution for the WCIP. The General Assembly adopted the resolution, which decides how the WCIP will be organized, on September 17, 2012.

The three UN mandates specific to Indigenous peoples – UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – have also initiated discussions on the World Conference in line with resolution 65/198. The Permanent Forum welcomed the opportunity and responsibility for playing a central role in the preparations of the World Conference. During the 11th session of the Forum in May 2012, time was devoted to an interactive dialogue on the World Conference, including the importance of the participation of Indigenous peoples. The UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples also discussed the World Conference under a separate agenda item in July 2012. The Special Rapporteur is also actively engaged in discussions on this critical issue. The three mandates have agreed that the Permanent Forum will take the lead role in this process.

A North American Indigenous Peoples Caucus (NAIPC) position was developed during the Sycuan preparatory session, held in Kumeyaay Territory (San Diego, California) at the Sycuan Resort, March 1-3, 2013. The NAIPC meeting was graciously hosted by the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation. The North American position reflects the right of self-determination, implementation of UNDRIP, decolonization, land rights, environment, violence against women, among other matters.

Universal Period Review

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a process which involves an examination of the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States. The UPR provides an opportunity for all States to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to overcome challenges to the enjoyment of human rights. On April 26, 2013, Canada underwent its second period review. A total of 83 States participated in the review.

Under the UPR procedures NGOs can make written submissions raising issues related to any of Canada's obligations under international human rights, including ratified human rights treaties such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and declarations such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The AFN and 47 other organizations in Canada submitted shadow reports, which provided the UPR additional context in assessing Canada's compliance with its international obligations.

The AFN, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and the Canadian Human Rights Commission each reflected on Canada's narrowing of the application of the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA). We noted that Canada's attempt to exempt funding for on-reserve services from the definition of a "service" within section 5 of the CHRA is detrimental and amounts to institutional discrimination. The AFN also spoke to self-determination, reconciliation, murdered and missing women, First Nation children, citizenship, economic development, and the environment.

States participating in the dialogue posed a series of recommendations to Canada. These pertained to the following:

- To take further steps to prevent violence against Indigenous women and girls and to develop a comprehensive national strategy for addressing such acts;
- To consider setting up an independent national enquiry into missing Indigenous women;
- To take further legislative and administrative measures to improve the lives of Aboriginal peoples and to ensure access to education for all Aboriginal girls;
- To ensure parity of funding and services between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities;
- To ensure the effective implementation of CEDAW and the CERD with particular focus on Aboriginal peoples;
- To enhance participation of Indigenous people in consultations on public policies that affected them;
- To continue to engage with civil society groups;

- To continue to combat racial discrimination, including among minority groups, immigrants, people of African descent and Muslims;
- To remove disparities in the implementation of anti-racism legislation, policies, programmes and best practices;
- To take measures to address the concern raised by the CRC on the lack of prevention of child sexual exploitation and to consider establishing an office of the ombudsperson for children;
- To fully recognize the right to safe drinking water and sanitation;
- To reinforce policies and programmes developed to address poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, health care services and education;
- To continue to fully respect the rights of asylum seekers and refugees;
- Ratification of human rights instruments. The Convention on the rights of migrant workers, the OPCAT, the Rome Statute of the ICC, the Convention on enforced disappearances, the OP of the ICESCR, the OP to the CRPD, the 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education, the 3rd OP on the CRC, and the American Convention on Human Rights.

Convention on Biological Diversity

The AFN has been engaged on international environmental files for a number of years, most intensely at the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Actions taken by Parties at the CBD may have a profound positive impact on the state of the international law pertaining to Indigenous rights. For example the Akwe:kon Guidelines for social, cultural and environmental assessment were cited favorably in an international land rights case which recognized Indigenous self-determination in 2007. Development of domestic policy and legislation, such as the Species at Risk Act or the National Biodiversity Strategy, are heavily influenced by decisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The AFN is currently developing a submission to the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity on an international plan of work on customary and sustainable use, as well as on the use of the term ‘peoples’ within the Convention.

The AFN continues to meet with Canada’s Climate Change negotiating team to receive updates on the state of the international climate change negotiations, particularly with respect to Indigenous human rights and climate change, as well as the application of the standard of free, prior and informed consent in climate finance.

UN Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is a body of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ESOSOC). It is a policy-making body dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. The 57th session of the CSW took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from March 4-15, 2013.

The AFN submission to the CSW addressed systemic barriers many First Nation women face, resulting in higher levels of poverty, abuse and disempowerment. The AFN provided the CSW with information on murdered and missing women in Canada and Canada’s refusal to establish a public commission on the issue. In addition, the AFN provided specific information of the rate of First Nation women’s overrepresentation

in the criminal justice system, and the socio-economic position of First Nation women in Canada. Adeline Webber, National Chair of the AFN Women's Council, attended the 57th session.

World Intellectual Property Organization

The World Intellectual Property Organization has created an Intergovernmental Committee (IGC) to negotiate an international treaty on traditional knowledge, genetic resources and folklore. While government and industry seek to create a regime that allows for the continued use of Indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge and innovations, the AFN has been actively engaged in pushing for protection of First Nations' traditional knowledge, medicinal knowledge and cultural expressions from exploitation, misappropriation and theft by third parties. The AFN has proposed a number of protections, including strict civil and criminal sanctions for outsiders who obtain, use or modify First Nations traditional knowledge, innovations, oral histories and cultural expressions without permission.

First Nations are well aware that the current intellectual property regime does not protect First Nations' rights, as it fails to recognize the unique nature of traditional knowledge and Indigenous cultural expressions. These forms of expression do not fit neatly within the parameters of copyrights, patents and trademarks. Thus, the AFN has been advocating for a more inclusive regime to address these obvious discrepancies, which should include a binding international agreement containing specific action items.

A representative of the AFN had attended WIPO IGC sessions on February 4-8, 2013 and April 22-26, 2013.

Canada – China: Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments (FIPA)

Canada and China began negotiation of a Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement in 1994. The last formal round of negotiations took place in January 2012 in Beijing, where an agreement was concluded. The agreement covers a comprehensive scope and substantive obligations pertaining to national treatment, most-favoured-nation treatment, minimum standards of treatment, transparency, performance requirements, transfers and expropriation. In addition, the agreement will grant investors access to investor-state dispute settlement that is governed by detailed rules on standing, procedural requirement and enforcement.

First Nation communities have objected to FIPA. Concerns relate to the environmental impacts that may be seen during the life of the 30-year FIPA, as well as lack of consultation with First Nations; impacts the FIPA will have on current treaties, Aboriginal rights and title; and issues of China-based interests suing levels of government in Canada. The Hupacasath First Nation has filed a legal challenge to the Canada - China Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (FIPA). The Hupacasath First Nation challenge focuses on the lack of First Nations consultation and accommodation, the effects on the future of natural resources, and the disregard of treaty relationships that Canada has with First Nations.

The AFN has written the Prime Minister, the government of Canada, as well as a number of embassies in Ottawa. The AFN is developing a strategy to deal with all of Canada's bilateral trade agreement. At present, Canada has signed 35 FIPA trade agreements with other countries and is currently negotiating an additional 14 agreements.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continued advocacy regarding the implementation of the standards set out in the UNDRIP within the laws and policies of Canada regarding Treaties, comprehensive claims, self-government, and the full range of issues affecting First Nation and Canada relations.
- Continued advocacy efforts in the international fora and through international relationship building.



PARLIAMENTARY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) continued work to build strong relationships with Parliamentarians, provincial and territorial governments and representatives of other countries. Along with specific focus on building and maintaining connections between First Nation leadership, Parliamentarians and senior public servants, the AFN monitors and provides strategic input and communications on legislation affecting First Nations. The AFN also seeks to link with international representatives in Ottawa to facilitate greater knowledge and awareness of First Nation contributions and the potential of economic partnerships with First Nations.

The AFN has continued to advance strategic issues of relevance to First Nations as part of the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group (AAWG) created in August 2009 by the Council of the Federation (CoF). This has included focused work in priority areas, such as education, economic participation and ending violence against Indigenous women and girls.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Parliamentary Advocacy, Outreach and Engagement in Parliamentary Processes

It has been a very busy year in monitoring and engaging in Parliamentary processes. During this session the AFN continued focus on the clear and consistent priorities First Nations have expressed through resolutions, asserting our rights and affirming our responsibilities and ensuring that the federal legislators respect and understand First Nations' inherent rights and jurisdiction over matters on their lands and with regards to their citizens.

During this session the National Chief, AFN Regional Chiefs and secretariat staff have made over 15 committee presentations in addition to numerous written submissions in both the House of Commons and the Senate.

As in previous years, the AFN participated in the Pre-Budget consultation process, outlining priority areas for significant and sustained investments.

The AFN actively engaged in advocacy with First Nations and parliamentarians in efforts to ensure First Nation concerns were understood, and provided clear messages that First Nations will use every avenue available to them to stop the derogation of their rights, and harm to their resources. The AFN is currently working with First Nations, their Treaty and regionally-mandated treaty organizations on legal strategies going forward.

A number of Bills with significant impacts on First Nations passed in recent months despite clear opposition to their unilateral imposition and the far reaching measures they will force on First Nation governments. Most notable among these are changes to the Fisheries Act in Bill C-45 (the second budget implementation bill), Bill C-27: *First Nations Financial Transparency Act*, Bill S-2: *Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act*, Bill S-8: *Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act*. Strategies to mitigate the impact of these

new laws are under development among First Nations organizations across the country, and the AFN will continue to support these efforts.

Throughout the session, AFN officials have maintained consistent communication with Members of Parliament (MPs) and Senators to ensure they are aware of First Nations' concerns. Opposition MPs and Senators have been instrumental in raising the profile and awareness of First Nation issues in the House of Commons, the Senate and during committee business. National Chief Atleo has also met with leaders of opposition parties to ensure their understanding of First Nations' priorities and ongoing support to further these through all available processes.

In addition, the AFN facilitates direct access of First Nations to Parliamentarians and assists with securing and supporting meetings and committee appearances along with organizing an annual reception for Chiefs and Parliamentarians at the Special Chiefs Assembly.

The AFN provides weekly e-mail updates while the House of Commons is in session and these are also posted on www.afn.ca.

Council of the Federation / Aboriginal Affairs Working Group

The Council of the Federation (CoF) is a body formed in 2003 consisting of all provincial and territorial Premiers. The CoF has invited leaders of the five National Aboriginal Organizations (NAOs) to meet with them in advance of their regular annual meeting every year since 2004. As a direct response to calls by the AFN at the CoF in 2009, the Premiers agreed to establish an Aboriginal Affairs Working Group (AAWG) consisting of provincial and territorial Aboriginal Affairs Ministers and NAO leaders to follow-up on work between annual meetings of the CoF. The AAWG typically meets once or twice per year to review work and make recommendations to the CoF. Officials from the NAOs and Provinces and Territories collaborate throughout much of the year in preparation for these meetings.

In July, 2012, National Chief Atleo, along with the leaders of other national organizations met with Premiers and Territorial leaders at the CoF meeting in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. The focus of the meeting was on Education, Violence Against Aboriginal Women & Girls, and Economic Development, as well as Crisis & Emergency Management. Premiers and Territorial leaders signed the AFN banner and made the pledge "to live violence free and to personally work to achieve safety and security for all Indigenous peoples – women and men, girls and boys".

On November 1- 2, 2012, Manitoba convened the 3rd National Aboriginal Women's Summit in Winnipeg, which had special focus on murdered and missing women. Representatives from the AFN National Women's Council and regional organizations participated in this meeting, however there was very limited opportunity for their engagement. Following the meeting, Provincial and Territorial Ministers committed to raise the matter of a national inquiry with their respective premiers and to revisit this at the next meeting of the AAWG.



The AAWG Ministers and National Aboriginal Leaders met on April 17, 2013, in Winnipeg, to review the progress that has been made to date and made a number of recommendations for follow-up to the Council of the Federation, which will meet with National Aboriginal Leaders at Niagara-on-the-Lake on July 24, 2013. Notably, the AAWG agreed to further work to close the graduation gap and income gap, called upon the federal government to hold a National Public Inquiry into murdered and missing Aboriginal women and girls, and added housing and disaster mitigation and emergency management to their list of priority areas requiring attention.

The AAWG Ministers and National Aboriginal Leaders are scheduled to meet again in November to further key priorities from the meeting of the CoF in Niagara-on-the-Lake on July 24, 2013. The National Chief will seek commitment from premiers to move forward on First Nations' priorities, including resource revenue sharing, education, emergency management, housing and ending violence.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue facilitating access to Parliamentarians and key decision-makers.
- Focused advocacy days throughout the year.
- Continue providing timely information to First Nations on the activities of Parliament, including legislation and committee business.
- Continue to monitor key legislative initiatives, provide information to First Nations and advocate on their behalf to Members of Parliament and Senators.
- Further updates on progress arising from the CoF / AAWG process.

SUPPORTING FIRST NATION GOVERNMENTS

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) continues to pursue a broad vision endorsed by Chiefs-in-Assembly that includes advocacy and research to support First Nation governments to implement their jurisdiction in a manner and pace that they choose.

As a key plank of this work, AFN is committed to the pursuit of new fiscal arrangements that embody the Nation-to-Nation relationship, have clear and mutual accountability requirements and support First Nation self-determination.

The sustainability and equitability of funding levels has a significant impact on the ability of First Nation governments to provide adequate services to their citizens. First Nation citizens face some of the most difficult social and economic problems in Canada and as a result First Nation governments often have a more difficult task than other governments delivering services.

If there is to be reconciliation between the rights and interests of First Nations and the sovereignty of the Crown, then Canada must renew its relationship with First Nations. It must recreate a relationship built on the principle of respect for Nations, for people and for the land, the principle of sharing and the principle of community responsibility to ensure we all succeed together for now and seven generations hence. A sustainable funding base is essential to create the conditions for First Nations to develop economically.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN continues to facilitate the sharing of information, experiences and challenges to assist First Nations to chart their paths forward by learning from practical experience of the many communities demonstrating and strengthening self-governing capacity. First Nation leaders since the Penner report have been calling for new financial arrangements. This has been demonstrated through several years of national advocacy, resolutions and AFN pre-budget submissions (i.e., 2012 Pre-Budget Submission as well as AFN Resolutions 61/2012, 24/2011, 23/2011, and 77/2008).

Leading up to the meeting between First Nation leaders and the Prime Minister on January 11, 2013, the area of a “Fundamentally transformed fiscal relationship” was identified as requiring urgent discussion and was described as “*guaranteeing fairness and sustainability and removing all arbitrary caps and burdens on the current, inefficient, ineffective and unfair funding relationship for First Nation programs and services.*”

This furthers supports from January 24, 2012 Crown-First Nations Gathering commitment:

“As a tangible first step, Canada and First Nations will work on a renewed relationship that is based on:

- a. Movement toward a single, multi-year Government of Canada financial arrangement for First Nations with high-performing governance systems*
- b. Improved accountability provisions for all parties*
- c. Financial self-sufficiency of First Nations as the end-goal*

A working group with First Nations, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Finance Canada and other relevant departments will be established to review the structure of financial arrangements between the federal government and First Nations.”

As a result of this commitment, the Joint Working Group on Financial Arrangements (WGFA) was established and has had a series of meetings in 2012 and 2013, including a workshop with First Nation Chief Administrative and Financial Managers Officers from across the country in February 2013.

Also at the January 11, 2013 meeting with the Prime Minister, Chiefs reiterated how there is currently no mechanism to support Nation Building and First Nations moving beyond the *Indian Act*. The Prime Minister stated he was open to ideas on how to move forward.

The AFN continues to push for substantive work stemming from the 2012 Crown-First Nations Gathering to support a concerted look at the barriers to our governments achieving their full potential. Areas of focus include:

- Seeking support for developing capacity for First Nation governments (e.g. community planning, constitution development, governing institutions); and,
- Exploring new options and mechanisms for governance reform and to support First Nations moving beyond the *Indian Act*.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to support First Nations as they direct.
- Compile and share information on governance approaches and practices of First Nations governments and augment institutional and law-making tools on the AFN website.
- Continue to advocate for a new fiscal relationship between Canada and First Nations, one that is reflective of the Nation-to-Nation relationship and includes sustainable and adequate funding transfers.
- Pursue opportunity with the WGFA to improve the accuracy, utility and validity of AANDC’s General Assessment (GA) Tool which the department uses to determine the nature of financial agreements it will enter into with First Nations.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Unit produces and distributes information designed to advance the goals and priorities of First Nation peoples and governments. The Unit works to ensure that the messages and perspectives of the AFN and First Nations are properly communicated and understood and that the National Chief, Regional Chiefs and other spokespeople are involved in and given the opportunity to speak publicly through media and other fora to communicate First Nation perspectives. As part of the ongoing efforts to maximize communications potential, the Communications Unit has implemented an active social media campaign using the AFN website, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and e-mail blasts.

AFN Communications strategies and activities are based on clear direction and positions from First Nations in key areas such as education, economic opportunities, community safety and security, ending violence, governance, and claims resolution, among others, as outlined in AFN resolutions.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Media and Public Relations

The Communications Unit advises, prepares and implements strategic communications policy and planning for the AFN as a whole, as well as strategies for specific initiatives and/or activities. The Unit works to develop materials and provide information to First Nations, the media and general public about the AFN, its activities and positions, as well as the National Chief's agenda and priorities.

The Communications Unit prepares press releases, media advisories and statements which are distributed nationally (in English and French) to Aboriginal and mainstream media, with regional distribution as applicable. The Communications Unit prepared and distributed more than 140 press releases/statements during the 2012-13 fiscal year. Communications also prepares media lines, backgrounders, letters to the editor and editorials on current issues.

The Unit prepares speaking notes for the National Chief and AFN spokespeople that are used at a variety of events for wide-ranging audiences, including First Nation governments, groups and organizations, professional associations, national and international organizations, and federal and provincial governments. Key events during this reporting period included the Chiefs Assembly on Education, the National Treaty Forum, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) on First Nations Child Welfare, and numerous regional assemblies and gatherings.

Communications seeks to establish the profile of First Nation peoples and issues through media. The Communications Unit is active in media outreach and media relations and has setup background briefings and editorial boards with media.



Over the past year, there have been several developments that have resulted in widespread national and international media coverage for the AFN and the National Chief, including the meeting between First Nation leaders and the Prime Minister on January 11, 2013, the CHRT on First Nations Child Welfare, education, treaties, comprehensive claims, resource development, and federal legislation impacting First Nations.

Public Awareness and Public Education

The Communications Unit works to raise awareness and understanding of First Nation issues and the AFN's role, responsibilities and activities in this regard. The AFN understands that First Nations have different communications needs and different ways to access information. For this reason, the AFN uses a mix of traditional and new media to disseminate information as widely as possible.

The AFN issues regular updates on the National Chief's activities and work underway at the national office. National Chief's communiqués are distributed by fax and e-mail to all First Nations, provincial/territorial organizations (PTOs) and tribal councils, and are also posted online in both print and video format.

The website (www.afn.ca) is updated regularly to provide current information on AFN activities and priorities. Live webcasting is available for AFN Assemblies, which included three during the last year: the Annual General Assembly, Chiefs Assembly on Education and the Special Chiefs Assembly. The AFN also coordinated electronic distribution of a daily newsletter to delegates during Assemblies.

The AFN continues to expand its use of social media, including two Twitter accounts (AFN_Updates and AFN_Comms) with more than 15,900 followers combined and the AFN Facebook page (Assembly of First Nations / Assemblée des Premières Nations), which has more than 9,800 "likes".

Public information is also distributed to more than 2,000 subscribers through an e-mail subscription service (listserv). Users can sign up on the AFN website.

The Communications Unit also offers editing, desktop publishing and production coordination for the AFN Secretariat, as well as video recording/editing of National Chief messages for the AFN website, YouTube and external events.

Communications Strategies

The Communications Unit develops and implements global AFN communications as well as targeted strategies for specific events, issues and initiatives. The Unit provides advice, recommendations and communications support to the National Chief, and policy areas within the AFN Secretariat. Communications advice and recommendations are also provided to communities or Nations upon request.

During this reporting period, Communications staff contributed to various planning committees for the Chiefs Assembly on Education, Special Chiefs Assembly, National Forum on Community Safety and Ending Violence, and the Parliamentary Relations Working Group, among others.

Translation

The Communications Unit coordinates all French/English translation requirements to ensure that the Canadian public and First Nations are able to access and understand all public materials produced by the AFN in both French and English. As per AFN policy, all public documents that are distributed nationally (including those posted on the AFN website) are available in French and English.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Ongoing media and public relations work involving media advisories, press releases, speeches, and interviews.
- Publication of Bulletins/Communiqués.
- Ongoing French translation of public materials.
- Ongoing editing and desktop publishing of AFN publications.
- Ongoing updates of the AFN website.
- Increased and enhanced use of new media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and mobile applications.



IMPLEMENTING RIGHTS

First Nations have inherent Aboriginal and Treaty rights, which are also recognized and protected by Canada's Constitution. The Assembly of First Nations carries out advocacy to support the advancement of these rights and associated responsibilities in efforts to create the space for First Nations to implement their own rights and decisions over lands, territories and resources.



TREATY IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Strategy on Treaty Implementation is guided by Resolution 07/2010, Sacred Treaties – Sacred Trust: Working Together for Treaty Implementation and Advancing our Sovereignty as Nations.

Treaty-making processes of the 18th and 19th centuries were undertaken in the spirit of peaceful co-existence and mutual respect by First Nations with the Crown. However, the imposition of the *Indian Act* and other legislation directly undermined Treaties which manifest nation-to-nation relationships with the Crown. First Nations' understandings about the nature of Treaties, the significance of the Treaty-making processes and the spirit and intent of Treaties are critical, as are the oral histories and First Nation laws that governed at the time of Treaty-making.

Moving forward, the AFN's role strictly involves facilitating and supporting the views of Treaty holders from all Treaty Nations to further engagement with the Crown. To be clear, the AFN will use all tools available to create the necessary space for Treaty First Nations to advance Treaty implementation. This is the foundation upon which AFN carries out its advocacy – consistent with the principles and standards previously established by the Chiefs-in-Assembly – pursuing a strengths-based approach where Treaties are viewed as the basis for lasting solutions.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Treaty leadership have been frustrated by the lack of progress made on advancing Treaty Implementation approaches or finding common ground on Treaty Implementation. The work described in the National Strategy on Treaty Implementation as well as the First Nation Treaty Parties Statement on the Observance and Enforcement of Treaties builds upon the endorsement of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) by Canada in fall 2010. Article 37 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states:

“Indigenous Peoples have the right to the recognition, observance and enforcement of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements concluded with States or their successors and to have States honour and respect such treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements.”

The endorsement of the UN Declaration provides a significant focal point for a Treaty based dialogue with the Crown and between Treaty holders. The UN Declaration represents the minimum human rights standards to guide Treaty implementation, self-determination and recognition of rights.

Leading up to the January 11, 2013 meeting between First Nations Treaty leaders and the Prime Minister, discussions amongst Treaty leadership centered around the need for the Government of Canada to provide more oversight from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the Privy Council Office (PCO) on Treaty Implementation and for the federal government to establish the appropriate mandates and structure to support Treaty implementation.

As part of this meeting with First Nations Treaty leaders, the Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers agreed to create a high level working process for establishing frameworks with necessary mandates for the implementation of Treaties on a Treaty-by-Treaty basis, between Treaty parties Nation-to-Nation.

This proposed mechanism would only initiate, coordinate and facilitate Treaty implementation discussions amongst the Treaty parties. Such a process would ensure a whole of government approach that does not subvert or subject Treaties to expression of federal policies or programs and would provide opportunities and a forum for Treaty Nations to engage directly with the state to achieve a common understanding of Treaty Implementation.

This would be done on the understanding that each Treaty Nation would negotiate implementation on their own terms on a Treaty-by-Treaty basis – and not a ‘one-size-fits-all’ model. This would also serve to elevate Treaty discussions above and beyond Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada with the intent of achieving a true Nation-to-Nation dialogue.

As a follow up to the January 11, 2013 meeting, the AFN hosted a National Treaty Forum on March 26-27, 2013, which was designed to promote discussions from Treaty regional perspectives on the basis of Treaty grouping in accordance with the signatories of the various Treaties. Each Treaty region (Numbered Treaties, Pre and Post Confederation Treaties) was asked to present on their views on requirements for Treaty implementation to occur and identify next steps. A Summary Report has been developed highlighting key discussion points and next steps.

This year also marks the 250th anniversary of the Royal Proclamation signed by King George III on October 7, 1763. The Royal Proclamation is viewed as a foundational document for Canada as it provided instructions from the Crown to the settlers on the requirement for entering into Treaties with the Indigenous Nations and the respect for Indigenous land rights. Efforts to commemorate the Royal Proclamation are underway with events begin planned both internationally and domestically.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

In accordance with Resolution 7/2010, the AFN will continue to support Treaty First Nations and Treaty Territories by coordinating the necessary dialogue and facilitating the advocacy efforts lead by each Treaty region. The following highlights key activities moving forward:

- A Chiefs Task Force on Treaty Implementation and Enforcement to be struck on an urgent basis to scope out all aspects of the High Level Mechanism. This Task Force would be comprised of representatives from each Treaty region and allow for the sharing of Treaty Implementation Frameworks with the objective of creating a unified Treaty Implementation strategy.
- Facilitate political engagement between the Chiefs Task Force on Treaty Implementation and Enforcement and the PMO, PCO and federal Cabinet Minister Offices and departmental officials as required, to scope out all aspects of the high level working process and Treaty Regional process.

- Work towards establishing a technical Senior Oversight Committee as a companion to the High Level Mechanism; this would be comprised of representatives from the Treaty Regions, PMO, PCO, AANDC and other federal departments.
- Mark the 250th Anniversary of the Royal Proclamation domestically with a public awareness campaign regarding the truth of Indigenous sovereignty, history and Nation status.
- Mark the 250th Anniversary of the Royal Proclamation internationally by continuing to advocate for a delegation of Treaty First Nations to have an audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in October 2013.
- Report on the work stemming from the political engagement and the technical Senior Oversight Committee to the Chiefs-in-Assembly at all opportunities.



LAND RIGHTS AND CLAIMS

The Land Rights & Claims heading encompasses several distinct areas, most notably Comprehensive Claims, Specific Claims and Additions to Reserves (ATR). The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has held strategy sessions on Land Rights & Claims as a regular part of the agenda at its most recent Assemblies. During these sessions, a variety of issues and new resolutions were reviewed, including:

- Resolution 26/2012 – Additions to Reserve Policy and Process Reform
- Resolution 58/2012 – Canada’s “Results-Based” Approach to Treaty and Self-Government Negotiations (Comprehensive Claims)
- Resolution 79/2012 – Implementation of the Specific Claims Political Agreement of 2007

There are two distinct bodies that oversee the issues that fall under the Land Rights & Claims heading:

- the Chiefs Committee on Claims has existed for more than two decades and meets several times a year to discuss issues relating to Specific Claims and ATR;
- an ad hoc Comprehensive Claims Policy Working Group has been in place since before the 2010 Annual General Assembly, and has met regularly to discuss policy reform and strategy.

A number of additional topics are associated with Land Rights & Claims, including Claims Over \$150 Million, Landless Bands and Modern-Day Treaty Implementation. These are reflected in various other resolutions and activities.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Comprehensive Claims

The reform of Canada’s Comprehensive Claims Policy (CCP) is currently a focal point for AFN advocacy and was advanced as a priority at the January 11, 2013, meeting with the Prime Minister.

Outcomes from the January meeting included a commitment from the Prime Minister to establish a joint high level mechanism to review the CCP, which has led to the establishment of a joint Senior Oversight Committee (SOC). The SOC has met on a number of occasions since January 11th, and includes representatives from the Prime Minister’s Office, the Privy Council Office, the Aboriginal Affairs Minister’s office, and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC).

The focus of work to date has been on the development of Terms of Reference for the SOC, as well as broad discussions about how this work would be framed. A discussion paper was developed, along with a proposed statement for the Prime Minister, and tabled with Canada to advance discussions. Meaningful progress is expected to be made over the course of the current fiscal year.

Specific Claims

In October 2008, the *Specific Claims Tribunal Act* (SCTA) came into force. This meant that most claimants not satisfied with Canada's response to their claims would have access to an impartial, binding tribunal. Canada's efforts to process the backlog of hundreds of claims since the Tribunal was established, however, has created significant new challenges for First Nations. While Canada claims to have cleared the claims backlog, regrettably, only a small proportion of these claims have resulted in settlements (less than 15%) – the vast majority have been “rejected” or have had their file “closed”.

A 5-year legislative review of the SCTA is expected to begin in 2013-14. A claims gathering was held in March 2013 to gather input in preparation for this 5-year review and to make recommendations with respect to issues that must be addressed (available at www.afn.ca). Key concerns include the high number of rejected claims, partial offers, and Canada's processing and funding of claims.

The Specific Claims Tribunal of Canada began to issue substantive decisions in July 2012. Canada is seeking a judicial review of one of its decisions (*Kitselas*), and may seek to do so in other cases as well. While this is not entirely unexpected, it could delay the potential impact that the Tribunal may have on the landscape of claims for some time.

Additions to Reserve

Efforts to improve the ATR policy and process have been the subject of a joint AFN-Canada technical table since late 2009. Progress on this work has been the subject of regular review by the Chiefs Committee on Claims (CCoC) and is expected to be made public by Canada in the near future. This will include a public posting period where anyone can make comments on the new draft policy for joint consideration prior to finalization. Further information will be made available as timelines are confirmed.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- A Strategic Dialogue Session on comprehensive claims was hosted in the B.C. region in May to both inform and gather input from leadership in B.C. Other such sessions are expected to be planned for the Quebec and Atlantic regions during this fiscal year.
- Substantive progress is expected by the fall, with the end of the fiscal year as the target for a completed policy revision on comprehensive claims.
- The AFN will continue to support advocacy and engagement in anticipation of the 5-year review of the Specific Claims Tribunal Act.
- A Tribunal Advisory Committee meeting will take place later this year to make recommendations with respect to the review.
- Finalization of the draft ATR policy, post-public review, is likely to take place this fall.
- The joint technical committee will examine the potential benefits of national ATR legislation once the final policy takes effect.

BORDER CROSSING

First Nations have Indigenous and Treaty rights to travel and trade freely across the US-Canada border, as recognized and affirmed in the Jay Treaty of 1794, section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and Article 36 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Issues of interest in this policy area are cross-border mobility and trade, enhanced border security, transport of sacred items, and the development of First Nation identification card systems.

The Chiefs-in-Assembly have asserted that the remedies that are currently available, including passports from Canada and the US and the Secure Certificate of Indian Status from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) do not meet the needs of First Nation citizens and continue to violate inherent and Treaty rights. Resolution 20/2010 calls for the use of Indigenous passports and urges the Government of Canada to work with First Nations in establishing their own systems of secure identification, based on their nationhood, citizenship, jurisdiction, and inherent rights. In addition, Resolution 52/2011 reaffirms First Nations sovereignty as reflected in Treaty relationships with the Crown and the responsibility to protect the resources of First Nation lands and the rights of First Nation citizens; the resolution further recognizes the jurisdiction and sovereignty of each distinct Nation to develop, create, and circulate their own identification cards. Resolution 78/2011 directs the AFN to seek resources to convene the Second International Indigenous Border Security Summit in Akwesasne.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Second International Indigenous Border Security Summit

The AFN is working on securing the resources to host the Second International Indigenous Border Security Summit in collaboration with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. The Summit is planned for November 2013. All Chiefs are encouraged to attend the Summit which will provide an opportunity to discuss border-related issues with representatives of the Canadian and US governments, as well as to share expertise and build Indigenous networks around issues, such as cross-border travel, trade, policing, and emergency preparedness.

Secure Certificate of Indian Status (SCIS)

AANDC is accepting applications for the in-Canada format of the SCIS by mail. A number of AANDC offices are also accepting applications, including AANDC Headquarters in Gatineau and other offices listed on the AANDC website. The AANDC website advises that the remaining offices and First Nations will continue to issue the current version of the status card (CIS). AANDC has received assurance from the US Department of Homeland Security that US officials will continue to accept the domestic SCIS as well as the CIS for entry into the US by land and water.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Information sharing and dialogue on First Nation border crossing issues, especially as they relate to the rights of First Nation citizens to travel and trade freely within their territories and as citizens of their First Nations.
- Planning the Second International Indigenous Border Summit and co-hosting the event in November 2013.
- Seeking updates from AANDC on the implementation of the Secure Certificate of Indian Status and continued advocacy for changes, based on input from Chiefs.
- Supporting dialogue on the development of Indigenous identification cards and systems that meet international identification management standards.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) supports First Nations as leaders in the environment and ensures they have the information and analysis needed to empower decision-making and exercise of First Nations' responsibilities. Key functions in environmental stewardship include advocacy at the national and international levels to ensure clear recognition and protection of First Nations rights and title, and information sharing, research, analysis and knowledge dissemination to support First Nations.

Environmental Health files are focused on generating knowledge, disseminating knowledge and in advancing First Nations rights and interests using knowledge on chemical exposure and other environmental health issues. This is accomplished through the First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environmental Health Study, the First Nations Environmental Health Innovation Network and a range of policy-based processes such as the Chemicals Management Plan, the Metals Mining Effluent Regulations and the National Pollutants Release Inventory.

Biological Diversity files are focused on Species at Risk. The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) came into force in 2004 to protect, recover and ensure the sustainable management of wildlife in Canada. On biological diversity, the AFN continues its advocacy to recognize and advance the rights of Indigenous peoples in international negotiations at the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The AFN remains engaged with the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) on options for the long-term management of spent nuclear fuel waste. In this fiscal year, the AFN has worked to improve long-term risk assessment of potential host sites. Finally, the AFN continues to work on facilitating nation-to-nation linkages between tribes and First Nations on adaptation to climate change.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study

Mandated through Resolution 30/2007, the First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study (FNFNES) is jointly led by the AFN in partnership with academic researchers. Funded by Health Canada, the FNFNES aims to document and establish baseline information on First Nations peoples' diets and exposure to contaminants through traditional foods and drinking water. While the study was originally conceived to address concerns around chemical contamination of traditional foods, other components were added to address emerging issues such as pharmaceuticals in surface water, food security and barriers to accessing traditional foods. Conducted in partnership with First Nation communities who choose to participate, the FNFNES is community based and results will be used to support advocacy and benefit First Nations.

To date, the FNFNES has reported results for First Nations in British Columbia and Manitoba. Data has been collected in Ontario and is currently being analyzed while First Nations in Alberta are now being engaged as the next region to participate in 2013. The FNFNES will work with approximately 11 First Nations in Alberta to collect data throughout 2013 by hiring and training Community Research Assistants. First

Nations own their FNFNES results in accordance with the principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession.

The AFN is responsible for the communications component of the FNFNES and also has contributed to the water components. Included is the AFN's role in ensuring that First Nations are appropriately involved at all stages of the project and that the research will benefit First Nations by addressing First Nations' concerns and research questions.

High rates of food insecurity have been one of the main findings to date of the study, and as a result a follow-up project to address this important issue is now being planned in partnership with First Nations from regions which have publically available FNFNES results. Other issues that the FNFNES has quantified include barriers to accessing and using traditional foods, low-levels of consumption of some nutrients and vitamins and recommendations on dietary choices to reduce exposure to harmful contaminants. To date, the FNFNES has found that the diet was better on days when traditional foods were eaten than on those days when it was not. As such, the recommendation is to promote the consumption of traditional foods for First Nations.

The AFN continues to look for opportunities to translate the FNFNES results to advocacy and action for First Nations to improve access to traditional foods and to benefit the health of our communities and ecosystems.

First Nations Environmental Health Innovation Network and Chemicals Management Plan

The First Nations Environmental Health Innovation Network (FNEHIN) strives to create linkages between First Nations who are interested in environmental health research and academic researchers. The network aims to assist First Nations in identifying, researching and solving environmental health issues by facilitating capacity development and partnerships, by providing relevant information and tools to strengthen institutions and promote self-reliance.

The AFN has a seat on Canada's Chemicals Management Plan (CMP) Stakeholder Advisory Council which provides advice to Environment Canada and Health Canada on the ongoing risk assessment and risk management of chemical substances. The AFN also participates in the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) Working Group which provides advice to Environment Canada on recommendations for the reporting of pollutant releases by facilities in Canada.

The FNEHIN provides resources on funding opportunities, research guidelines, publications, environmental health news, monthly newsletter and a directory of researchers and First Nations who are looking to create a partnership. FNEHIN no longer receives the funding levels it once did and so unless supplementary funding can be identified, activities will need to be reduced and the future of the network needs to be considered.



The FNEHIN continues to seek out partnerships with academic researchers that would promote First Nations environmental health research capacity and to promote knowledge translation and dissemination activities specific to First Nations. An example of this is the partnership with CAREX Canada that established a First Nations Knowledge Translation Advisory Committee to adapt training materials and resources that CAREX Canada had developed for First Nations' needs.

The CMP continues to assess a number of high risk chemical substances as well as specific categories of chemicals. While progress is slow from the initial draft risk assessment of any particular chemical to the finalization of risk management activities, the CMP is progressing on a large number of chemicals simultaneously and faster than in other jurisdictions. The AFN is involved in providing advice on the process and progress of the CMP and how First Nations may be involved or affected. The AFN also conducts outreach directly to First Nations to educate and encourage First Nations involvement in the program.

The NPRI continues to make changes to improve the rigour of the data collected, ease of reporting for facilities and to assess when reporting requirements need to be changed. The NPRI Working Group is currently assessing whether to support a number of proposals that would require reporting of additional chemical substances and in new activities. By improving knowledge of the pollutants being released in Canada to air, water and land, First Nations will gain a greater knowledge of the potential impacts to health and the environment of their communities and traditional territories.

Species at Risk Act (SARA) and National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk (NACOSAR)

The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) is Canada's commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It came into full force in 2004 as legislation to protect, recover and to ensure the sustainable management of wildlife in Canada. AFN work in this area focuses on the implementation of the SARA on federal lands and the importance of ensuring First Nations' issues are included in joint federal-provincial-territorial discussions and initiatives on species at risk issues.

Established through the SARA, section 8.1, the National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk (NACOSAR) is currently comprised of representatives from the AFN, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, Métis National Council, and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

On October 19, 2012, the AFN participated in a Minister's Roundtable to identify areas of the SARA which require improvement. Eight areas were identified as existing challenges:

- Inadequacy of funding for First Nations;
- The need for greater inclusion of First Nations in all aspects of SARA implementation;
- The need to reduce the complexity of reporting under funding arrangements and using SARA processes;
- The need for a Priority Setting process to allocate funding;
- Greater Harmonization between federal, provincial and First Nation governments;
- Compliance and Stewardship, particularly related to recovery strategies;
- Protocols for intellectual property and ownership of traditional knowledge; and,
- Developing a socio-economic approach for the listing process.

It is expected that the Minister of Environment will host a second roundtable on the SARA that will be specific to Aboriginal issues in the fall of 2013. In preparation the AFN is coordinating its efforts with the South Okanagan-Similkameen Syilx Environmental Committee (SOSSEC) in regards to the roundtable and other upcoming work on species at risk.

On May 27, 2013, the three-year terms expired for the AFN's NACOSAR members, Regional Chief Roger Augustine and former Regional Chief Eric Morris. At the request of the Minister of Environment, the AFN has submitted nominees for consideration of appointment to the NACOSAR.

Internationally, the AFN continues to advocate for the full implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in international instruments such as the *Nagoya Protocol for Access and Benefit Sharing of Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge*. AFN advocacy is currently focused on ensuring Indigenous peoples are fully and effectively engaged in assessing compliance with the Protocol and in ensuring the Protocol is implemented consistent with the UNDRIP.

Nuclear Waste Management Organization

The AFN is currently working with the NWMO on development of scenarios-based risk assessment modeling, as well as exploring greater opportunities for engagement of youth, and particularly First Nations youth, by the NWMO.

Climate Change

The AFN secured funding to develop nation-to-nation networks of First Nations and tribes to share experiences on impacts and adaptation to climate change, as well as to explore the development of cross-border regional or national approaches to climate change. Due to funding constraints, this work will focus initially on building linkages between Maine tribes and New Brunswick First Nations.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Complete FNFNES reporting and analysis in Ontario, data collection in Alberta and engagement of First Nations in selecting the next region for participation in the study.
- Ongoing participation as an equal partner in the FNFNES to ensure that First Nations are involved in all stages of the project.
- Disseminate FNFNES results to First Nations and advocate for follow-up initiatives and research projects to address First Nations' concerns.
- Develop a proposal in partnership with First Nations for more in-depth study of food security, including efforts at the community level to address food insecurity and access to traditional foods.
- Conduct outreach activities to continue to grow the FNEHIN network, maintain up-to-date information on the website and ensure that First Nations have an appropriate network that can provide them with the information they need to address their environmental health concerns.
- Continue to identify partners to engage in providing training and resources to First Nations on environmental health research, including utilizing the FNEHIN network for knowledge dissemination.

- Continue to monitor developments under the CMP and the NPRI while assessing the links between the two programs and the potential impact upon First Nations.
- Support the NACOSAR in preparation for a National Workshop on Species at Risk, scheduled for fall, 2013.
- Complete two community-based workshops on climate change, one to be held in Maine and one to be held in New Brunswick, by August, 2013.



FISHERIES

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) works to promote First Nations' self-determination as related to aquatic resources management, fisheries governance and fisheries practices. The AFN advocates on behalf of First Nations for full engagement in the fisheries sector and for meaningful processes to ensure First Nations' input on fisheries legislation, policies, regulations, and management decisions.

This work is guided by the AFN National Fisheries Strategy (AFN-NFS 2010-15), which is designed to assist and restore First Nations' rightful role in managing the fisheries, aquatic and ocean resources. The NFS is a long-term plan that embodies the recognition, protection and implementation of First Nations' Aboriginal and Treaty rights. The NFS addresses a broad range of initiatives that support First Nations governance, access to resources, building capacity, and advocacy on the implementation of Supreme Court decisions. The NFS is aligned to respond to the broad range of issues while recognizing the importance of sustainable economies, environmental protection and assertion of First Nations inherent rights.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Changes to the Fisheries Act: Bill C-38 and Bill C-45 Legislative Reform

The AFN has provided analysis on federal omnibus Bills C-38 and C-45, which amend environmental legislation to align with the Government's Responsible Resource Development Plan. As a result of amendments to the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*, *Fisheries Act*, and *Navigable Waters Protection Act*, new policies and regulations are being created to implement legislation with respect to the governance and protection of aquatic resources.

Amendments in Bills C-38 and C-45 may weaken the protection for First Nations fisheries and aquatic resources; render liability unclear for damages to First Nations fisheries and aquatic resources; alter the governance system from "proactive" (i.e., preventing pollution) to "reactive" (i.e., leaving it to First Nations to pursue legal options against proponents in the event of damages); create a large degree of business uncertainty for activities in or near waterways (e.g., regulatory uncertainty issues for First Nations aquaculture projects or shoreline projects); and, potentially lower the reporting and compliance threshold for major projects.

The AFN has requested funding from Transport Canada for First Nations participation on reforms to the Navigable Waters Protection Policy and on a study regarding marine oil spill response and preparedness. The AFN has also called on DFO to engage with First Nations on a proposed Fisheries Protection Policy and regulations that contemplate listing Aboriginal fisheries exempt from *Fisheries Act* protections. The AFN is engaged in discussions with Environment Canada to determine government interpretations of the amended prohibition against the deposit of deleterious substances in fish bearing waters (i.e., substances harmful to fish life). Various advocacy tools have been circulated to First Nations regarding processes and timelines for responses and specific resources for regional engagement.

DFO Review of Aboriginal Capacity Programs

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) is conducting reviews of Aboriginal Capacity Programs that currently support capacity activities in fish management, policy development and enforcement. These include Aboriginal Aquatic Resource Oceans Management Program (AAROM), the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS), and the Aboriginal Guardian Program (AGP). Previous evaluations of programs have been conducted through the DFO Evaluation Branch, which can be perceived as a conflict of interest. The AFN is filing requests for full disclosure of the evaluation methods, standards, mandates, and scopes. The Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (AICFI) and Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative programs were renewed for another year at \$33.1 million in 2013-14.

National Aboriginal Fisheries Forum II

The 2nd National Aboriginal Fisheries Forum (NAFF II), “Seize the Economic Opportunities” was held October 2-4, 2012, in Nanaimo, B.C. The conference concentrated on business aspects of fisheries, such as marketing, attracting investment, access to capital, training, and aquaculture. The NAFF II was coordinated through a partnership between Aboriginal organizations and government partners. The five co-hosts included the First Nations Fisheries Council of British Columbia, AFN, Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat, Aboriginal Aquaculture Association, and the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia. The NAFF II Report is available on the AFN website.

Aquaculture Engagement

As a relatively new industry, aquaculture is unlocking new prospects for jobs and enhanced economic prosperity in rural and coastal First Nation communities across Canada. Some First Nations are well positioned to take advantage of these opportunities and have had some degree of success, while others are expressing interest in obtaining additional information on how to start aquaculture. There are also First Nations that do not want aquaculture in their territories.

In response to Resolutions 83/2008, 46/2011 and 66/2011, the AFN established a National Aquaculture Working Group (NAWG) to plan and strategize on ways to move forward on three key aspects of aquaculture: Governance; Policy Development and Regulations; and, Business and Economic Development.

During the summer and fall of 2013, the AFN assisted in facilitating two sessions of the DFO Aboriginal Aquaculture Engagement Initiative (AAEI) – Tier 1 (First Nations) and Tier 2 (First Nations and Government) – in the inland regions with the DFO. The AAEI sought input on solutions to challenges for aquaculture development for First Nations. The AFN has identified where further work can be accomplished through the NAWG process.

Marketing

First Nations are mobilizing to develop unique seafood product labels, marketing strategies and brands. Pursuant to Resolution 26/2011, the AFN developed a Fisheries Marketing Working Group comprised of First Nation fisheries representatives to explore the creation of branding and certification tools to promote First Nation seafood products. The AFN has held one Working Group meeting, and hopes to continue this group to facilitate further direction.

Inland Fisheries

Since 2011, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has not funded Aboriginal capacity programs for inland regions. Major inland issues include: fish market access; potential Freshwater Fisheries Marketing Corporation reform; policy/regulatory engagement capacity; pollution; aquatic invasive species; and, resource development impacts. Resolution 48/2012 calls for inland capacity funding. The AFN continues to urge DFO to create a new inland program or transparent engagement processes that provides mechanisms for dialogue that can address potential infringements on Aboriginal and Treaty rights. Without essential capacity, First Nations are unable to effectively respond, or participate in various processes that may affect the governance, management and conservation of fish habitat policies and regulations.

The Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) forces First Nation fishermen to sell their fish to one processing plant that holds a monopoly as a market broker. A range of issues associated with the history of the FFMC has caused some prairie provinces to pull out of the FFMC, while others are looking for alternate ways to sell their fish outside the FFMC. Inland Fisheries are interested in developing a First Nation Fisheries Co-op and inter-tribal trade between nations in North America.

National Fisheries Committee

Regional priority issues identified under the AFN National Fisheries Strategy 2010-15 in this fiscal year include: regulatory and policy development on fisheries and habitat protection, aquaculture, and aquatic invasive species; DFO program review; North American Indigenous Fisheries Forum (NAIFF 2014); secretariat support to the National Fisheries Committee and ad-hoc policy committees; and continued communication and outreach.

National priorities identified by the National Fisheries Committee (NFC) include: fisheries self-determination; First Nations priority access to fisheries; government recognition of First Nations' commercial fisheries; government recognition of treaty and rights-based fisheries; adequate fisheries protection; aquatic invasive species strategies; species at risk; regulatory and policy reforms; adequate consultation and accommodation on fisheries measures; and recognition of tax-exempt status for all First Nations fisheries.

North American Indigenous Fisheries Forum 2014

The AFN plans to host a North American Indigenous Fisheries Forum in the spring, 2014. Moving forward, the AFN will establish an internal working group and an external steering committee with the National Congress of American Indians, determine a date/location and a corresponding budget, work with the steering committee to set an agenda, and engage with the AFN Tri-Council.

Research

The AFN received funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for a joint project entitled Fish-WIKS (Fisheries Western and Indigenous Knowledge Systems) on improving fisheries governance by better incorporating western and Indigenous traditional knowledge. Project partners include Dalhousie University, Vancouver Island University, University of Toronto, University of Guelph, Government of Nunavut, First Nations Fisheries Council of BC, and the Unama'ki Institute of Natural

Resources. The project will create educational opportunities for First Nations students and has budgeted for 18 students at the undergraduate, masters, doctorate and post-doctoral levels. The project is expected to conclude in 2017.

Aquatic Animal Health Program

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is implementing a National Aquatic Animal Health Program (NAAHP) to prevent the spread of infectious diseases in farmed and wild fish stocks. CFIA and DFO are mandated to address domestic movement controls to prevent disease spread within Canada. Most impacted parties will be fish aquaculturists, processing establishments, bait distributors, processors and retailers. In the next few months, CFIA will be sending out a questionnaire to First Nations to determine where consultation may be necessary. CFIA has indicated that First Nations can request a face-to face meeting for consultations expected to be held over the summer.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continued advocacy on engagement mechanisms for policies and regulations created under the amendments to the *Fisheries Act*.
- Continued advocacy for regional consultation processes on legislative reform.
- Advocacy for First Nations' participation in the possible review of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.
- Advocacy for a fully-funded multi-year renewal by DFO of coastal and national Aboriginal programs and the creation of an inland fisheries program.
- Development of a multi-year strategy and 5-year long-term fisheries strategy.
- Hosting of the North American Indigenous Fisheries Forum in the spring, 2014.

ACHIEVING CHANGE FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

First Nations families are the core of our communities and must be supported through high quality, culturally and linguistically responsive education, culturally appropriate child welfare approaches, improved community well-being and full economic participation. First Nations people all over Turtle Island are acting now for change. As the youngest and fastest-growing population, First Nations are the leaders of today and will create the changes that must occur to ensure a better future for all of us. Collectively, we must work with and support First Nations in the rebuilding of families, clans, communities, and nations through social wellness and lifelong learning. Only then will we have an opportunity to overcome the effects of the residential school system and to restore our relationships with each other and the natural world.



EDUCATION, JURISDICTION AND GOVERNANCE

With Resolution 18/2011 (Moving Forward on First Nations Control of First Nations Education), First Nation leadership across Canada confirmed the priority of First Nations education and are dedicated to ensuring that every First Nations child will be supported to succeed through culturally and linguistically appropriate education. In advancing this priority, First Nations have set out a broad policy of First Nations control of First Nations education, reflecting Aboriginal and Treaty rights, responsibilities, and an Indigenous world view of lifelong learning.

Reconciling state laws, programs and policies with Indigenous rights to education may include activities which ensure access to education and services by First Nation students; identification of respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities; addressing comparability issues; ensuring adequate, secure and predictable funding for First Nations schools and programs; recognition and implementation of First Nations governance over education; addressing First Nations information privacy concerns; strategies to encourage parental engagement; recognition and implementation of initiatives to strengthen the use and teaching of First Nations languages; and ensuring the reflection of First Nations cultures and identities throughout the education environment. This work and activities are framed within the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

First Nations Education Legislation

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) has announced intentions to introduce First Nations education legislation by September 2014 and to explore mechanisms to ensure stable, predictable and sustainable funding for First Nation students. In October and December 2012, the AFN passed resolutions opposing the unilateral development of legislation on First Nations education. On December 11, 2012, the federal government announced the start of time-limited consultations with First Nations on the development of a First Nation Education Act and released a Discussion Guide which provides a suggested framework for their approach. First Nations have been clear that this process has not met the conditions for adequate consultation and free, prior, and informed consent. A national strategy has been drafted and discussed by the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) and the National Indian Education Council (NIEC) to support First Nations.

Education Information System (EIS)

Resolution 48/2011 directed AFN to inform the Minister of AANDC of the need to institute a formal process of consultation for the EIS and that until such a process is in place, to halt the implementation process of the EIS. Resolution 39/2012 called for a review of legal options to address privacy concerns, and for communication to the federal government to delay the implementation of the EIS until the concerns of First Nations have been addressed. Despite these efforts, AANDC is continuing to develop the EIS unilaterally.

Education Funding Human Rights Challenge

The AFN has worked with the First Nations Education Council (FNEC), Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN), and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society (FNCFC) to prepare a Human Rights complaint pursuant to Section 5 of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. The issue is that First Nations children and youth living on reserve and attending on-reserve schools across Canada are denied access to the same standard and quality of primary and secondary education programs and services to that available to children and youth living off reserve. This discrimination is historic, systemic and ongoing and affects approximately 70,000 First Nations children and young people. It is believed that potential success in the human rights case on discriminatory funding for First Nations child welfare will set a positive precedent for an education challenge.

The FNEC has taken the lead to encourage a Human Rights Complaint on Education regarding inequitable funding to First Nations schools, in conjunction with the AFN and other organizations, and has requested support from other First Nations across Canada. There is hope that more First Nations organizations will join the coalition to pursue this complaint.

Post-Secondary Education

The Audit and Evaluation Branch at AANDC conducted audits of the Elementary and Secondary Education Program and the Post-Secondary Education Program in 2012-13. First Nations representatives from across Canada participated either on the advisory committee or as key informants in the evaluation. Reports are currently being analyzed.

In March 2010, the Government of Canada announced plans to review the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP). Despite intensive discussions between AANDC and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), there are no changes to the program at this point.

The administration of the Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP) component of the PSE program was recently transferred from regional administration to headquarters. The implications of this decision are troubling. The process is set up to evaluate proposals against national government priorities and federal labour market needs. There are no assurances that local and regional priorities will be addressed. ISSP funds are used to support the delivery of accredited post-secondary programs. ISSP funding is an important funding source for Indigenous institutions of higher learning (IIHLs), capacity building programs for First Nations councils and organizations, and key First Nations programs at post-secondary institutions.

The AFN has advocated for broad application of the Indigenous Accord across elementary, secondary and post-secondary education. The AFN is participating with the Association of Canadian Community Colleges on the development of a protocol, similar to an Indigenous Accord created by Canadian Deans of Education in 2010. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada is currently exploring the expansion of the Indigenous Accord to the entire university sector. The Ontario Public School Boards' Association has embraced and agreed to promote national application of an Accord for elementary/secondary education.

The AFN is participating in a multi-year project lead by the Canadian Career Development Foundation, funded by HRSDC, on the State of Essential Skills Practice among First Nations, Inuit and Métis. The key activities have been to conduct a literature review, develop an inventory of essential skills programs for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and now considerations are being discussed for ‘growing a community of practice’.

First Nations Regional Early Childhood, Education, and Employment Survey (FNREEES)

Further to Resolution 19/2011, the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC), in collaboration with the CCOE and NIEC, and other national partners, has been identified to implement a survey in 2013-2014 on early childhood development, education, and employment for on-reserve and northern First Nation communities, that is compliant with OCAP principles and incorporates a holistic framework.

First Nations Languages

The AFN continues to strongly advocate the need for more support for First Nations languages and culturally-relevant education. In the past year, the AFN released two key reports dealing with languages and improved education outcomes:

First Nations Languages and Improving Student Outcomes provides a review of current language research to examine whether language immersion or being taught in Indigenous languages facilitates the development of language and cognitive abilities, including mental flexibility, abstract thinking, and problem solving. This project provides an inventory of evidence from local, national and international sites to support Indigenous language immersion and instruction as a significant factor for improved outcomes for learners in all subject areas.

Soul of Sovereignty: The Impact of Culturally Responsive Education on the Academic Achievement of First Nations Students explores the importance and impact of culturally-competent teachers utilizing First Nations cultural knowledge in the elementary and secondary school experience for creating optimal learning environments so that students can maximize their learning potential and move successfully through a lifelong learning curve.

In addition, the AFN continues to monitor the work of the United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Study of Language and Culture and provide relevant documentation. Approximately 90 key documents dealing with First Nations languages and education are posted on the AFN website.

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

An electronic network of First Nations Early Childhood Educators throughout Canada has been established. It is critical to continue to elevate the discussion on First Nations access to early childhood development and early childhood education programs which reflect First Nations identities and languages. Through the electronic network, the AFN provided information to brief the newly established Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) ECE Working Group to highlight issues in First Nations ECE.

Special Education and Student Support Services

An analysis of a Special Education comparability report commissioned by AANDC and released during the fall of 2012 reveals that several of its recommendations may enable First Nations to provide comparable levels of inclusive second and third level supports. While not as comprehensive as a full review of Special Education on reserve might be, the report may be useful for updating and amending the Special Education Program (SEP) terms and conditions which have essentially been the same since the program was first introduced in 2003 and strengthening the case for appropriate special education programming for First Nations schools. The analysis includes the above commentary and is in the process of being finalized as an AFN response to the Department and to stakeholders.

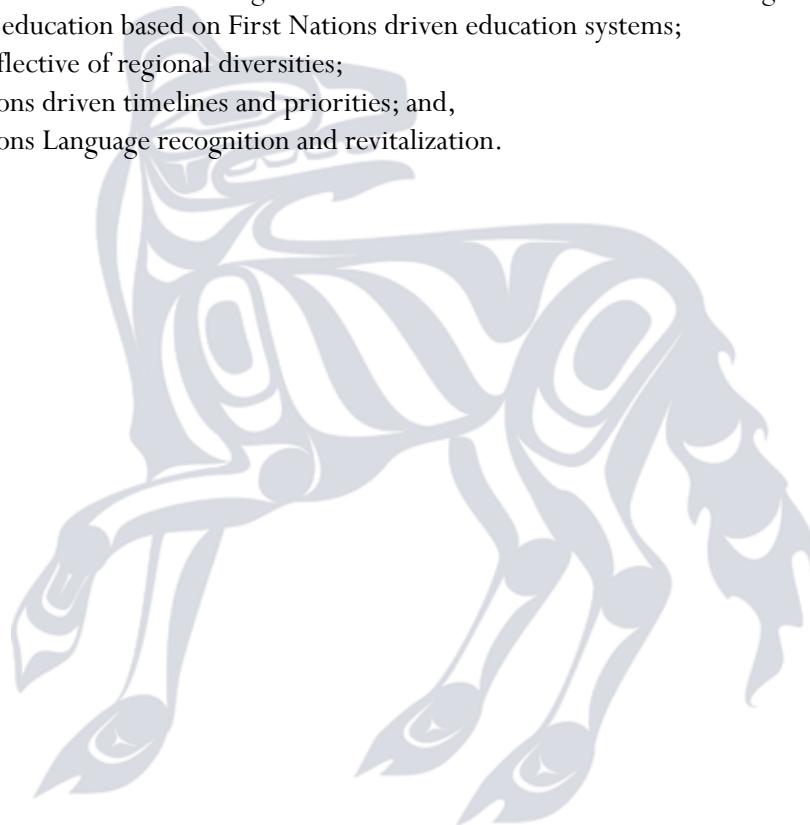
The AFN is also working to support the National Board of the Youth Solvent Addiction Committee (YSAC) to advocate for SEP funding for students housed within these centres.

***It's Our Time* First Nations Education Tool Kit**

Grounded in the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and reinforcing First Nations teachings and values, this Tool Kit is part of a comprehensive strategy to reach out to First Nation students, teachers, schools, and the public to create a greater awareness and understanding of First Nations' rights, histories, and cultures. It has been successfully piloted in select First Nations and non-First Nations schools in Manitoba and a full implementation plan begins in the fall.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continued work with the CCOE and NIEC to further Treaty and inherent rights to education and First Nations Control of First Nations Education which includes:
 - o equitable and sustainable funding for First Nations education within a lifelong learning context;
 - o quality of education based on First Nations driven education systems;
 - o change reflective of regional diversities;
 - o First Nations driven timelines and priorities; and,
 - o First Nations Language recognition and revitalization.



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) seeks to achieve the vision of “an inclusive, holistic and culturally-based social development system under First Nation control that builds healthy, safe and sustainable communities”. Key priorities for the AFN in social development are to further work in Income Assistance, Assisted Living, Family Violence Prevention, Child Welfare and Jordan’s Principle.

The following resolutions guide this work:

- Resolutions 01/2012, 02/2011, 61/2010: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada
- Resolutions 17/2012, 17/2009, 23/2004: Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Services
- Resolution 76/2011: Jurisdiction and Consultation on Child Welfare Policies
- Resolution 36/2011: Support for Child Welfare
- Resolution 37/2011: Income Assistance Shelter Policy
- Resolution 74/2010: Welfare Policies
- Resolution 06/2009: Children and the Canadian Human Rights Act
- Resolution 12/2008: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Income Assistance Program
- Resolution 13/2008: AFN-INAC Joint Working Group on Assisted Living
- Resolution 14/2008: Emergency Resolution on Child and Family Services
- Resolution 63/2008: Implementation of Jordan’s Principle

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Income Assistance

The AFN continues to build upon the work and materials that were produced in the last fiscal year. Dissemination of the Youth Income Assistance Toolkit and the Active Measures Community Resource Guide (AMCRG) is ongoing. Both resources have been shared widely, through physical distribution at the 2012 Annual General Assembly (AGA) and other forums, as well as electronically through our networks and the AFN Social Development Portal. A national workshop on the AMCRG and active measures was also held at the 2012 Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA).

The AFN Social Development Unit continues to work with the First Nations Income Assistance Working Group (FNIAWG) and continues to encourage AFN National Youth Council (NYC) participation to provide a youth voice and perspective to ongoing income assistance issues (Resolution 74/2010). The AFN NYC is actively engaged in ongoing discussion and planning for moving forward with the toolkit and continuing its role in helping First Nations youth become less dependent on Income Assistance.

Directed by Resolution 37/2011, the AFN continues to call on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) to properly consult and negotiate with First Nations on the development of new policies where it relates to the Income Assistance Shelter Policy. The AFN continues to make it a priority to seek active engagement of First Nations in all AANDC policy development related to Income Assistance.

Assisted Living

The First Nations Assisted Living Working Group (FNALWG) met twice in last year, to discuss an implementation strategy for the potential transfer of the in-home care component of the program to Home and Community Care (HCC) at Health Canada (HC). The proposed transfer has been delayed with no indication of whether the transfer will go ahead, and the FNALWG is now engaging AANDC in discussions over the impacts this proposed transfer would have at the grassroots level.

A case study was completed in the spring of 2013 in one First Nations community, which examined integration (HCC and Assisted Living) initiatives. An environmental scan that examined levels of service for community Assisted Living was also completed in 2013.

Family Violence Prevention

Family Violence Prevention has taken on a heightened profile in the last number of years. For example, at the 2012 AGA, Chiefs and delegates signed a banner and made a personal pledge to “live violence free and to personally work to achieve safety and security for all Indigenous peoples – women and men, girls and boys”. At the same AGA, Resolution 01/2012 was passed, affirming the direction of the AFN in demanding the “Government of Canada support community based initiatives and national programs that seek to promote public awareness and carry out advocacy and research about violence against Indigenous women”. The AFN and Native Women’s Association of Canada jointly hosted a National Forum on Community Safety and Ending Violence in April 2013 and continue work to develop a National Action Plan to End Violence.

The AFN continues to collaborate with partners including the National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence (NACAFV). In addition, the AFN developed a video in the spring of 2013 entitled “Live a Life of Integrity”, which included men and Elders discussing their approach towards building and sustaining healthy families and communities not impacted by violence.

Child Welfare

The AFN and the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society (FNCFCFS) filed a human rights complaint on February 5, 2007, arguing that the federal government is discriminating against First Nations children by failing to provide equitable and culturally-based services on reserve. The case is currently before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. Recently, it was divulged that the Government of Canada has withheld tens of thousands of documents that it was obligated to disclose to the lawyers representing the AFN and the FNCFCFS under the human rights commission rules. The Government of Canada is currently using this failure to disclose documentation as a delay tactic and has requested that the proceedings be put on hold while they gather the more than 50,000 documents. Discussions are currently underway on how to proceed given these recent revelations.

Jordan’s Principle

On November 23, 2011, lawyers on behalf of the Pictou Landing Band Council and Maurina Beadle filed an application against the Government of Canada arguing that the Government of Canada be required to cover the cost of care for Maurina Beadle’s severely disabled son, Jeremy. On April 4, 2013, a decision by the Federal Court ordered the Government of Canada to reimburse the money associated with helping Ms.

Beadle care for her son at home. This decision is the first in upholding the application of Jordan's Principle in providing health care services to First Nations children. Unfortunately, on May 7, 2013, the federal government appealed the decision. Despite the setback, Ms. Beadle and the Pictou Landing Band Council are confident that the courts will again judge in their favor. The role that the AFN will play in this appeal is to be determined.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Improve the working relationship between the AFN and AANDC on social development matters, including securing AFN involvement in high level policy discussions with AANDC leadership responsible for social development.
- Expand the 2012-2013 environmental scan on institutional care to cover two additional regions and conduct an environmental scan and analysis on policy options related to programs and services available to the elderly and disabled in First Nations communities
- Promote and disseminate the recently-developed film "Living a Life of Integrity" as an effective tool in encouraging a positive approach towards Family Violence Prevention.
- Work with partners on improving data collection tools related to Family Violence Prevention
- Develop a proposal guide to aid potential recipients in developing effective funding proposals for AANDC's Family Violence Prevention Program (FVPP).
- Continue to work with youth, mainly through the AFN NYC, to ensure that the work around decreasing youth dependence on Income Assistance continues and that youth are engaged and informed with respect to Income Assistance reform.
- Continue to monitor and participate, as determined by leadership, in Child Welfare related activities including potential Jordan's Principle related legal proceedings.
- Continue pursuing the human rights complaint on unequal funding for First Nations Child and Family Services.

INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) continues to play a central role advocating for the full implementation of the Indian Residential Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) and to achieve the overarching principles of healing and reconciliation for former Indian Residential School (IRS) students and Canadians.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Implementation of the IRSSA is in the final stages of its mandate. The AFN continues advocacy work on behalf of former IRS students and their families as liaises with service providers to facilitate the overarching principles of healing and reconciliation.

Common Experience Payment

There is \$1.9 billion set aside for the Common Experience Payment (CEP) in the IRSSA which recognizes the experience and impacts of residing at an Indian Residential School. There are 78,750 former IRS students currently eligible for the CEP; this may be augmented if applications to add schools to the IRSSA currently before the courts are granted approval. Newly added schools will have dates specified for the CEP and Independent Assessment Process (IAP) applications.

CEP Surplus & Personal Credits

Audit reports as of December 31, 2012 indicate a surplus of \$323,303,000 in the CEP allocation. All eligible CEP recipients will now be eligible for a \$3,000 personal credit (no cash value). A Request for Direction is being processed through the supervisory courts that will outline the terms and conditions of the CEP credits as well as the organization that will administrate the distribution of the credits. The personal credits are only redeemable for personal or group education services provided by education entities or groups pursuant to the terms and conditions developed by Canada and the AFN and approved by the supervisory courts. The court order will specify a specific timeframe for the personal credit program to be implemented and concluded.

Under the terms of the IRSSA, following the payment of personal credits to all eligible CEP recipients as well as the costs of administering the credits, all excess funding remaining in the Designated Amount Fund on January 1, 2015, will be transferred to the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund (NIBTF) and Inuvialuit Education Fund (IEF) to be used for education programs. The AFN has established the NIBTF with a Board of Directors that will be responsible for administering the CEP surplus following payout of the personal credits.

Independent Assessment Process

The Independent Assessment Process (IAP) is a settlement fund for claims of sexual abuses, serious physical abuse and other wrongful acts. Current data indicates 37,340 IAP applications were received by the September 19, 2012 deadline. To date, the IRS Adjudication Secretariat reports approximately \$1.952 billion in awards have been paid out, an amount that includes lawyers' fees and disbursements.

Resolution 54/2011 called on the AFN to request a three-year extension to the September 19, 2012 deadline. The AFN sent out notices via fax broadcast but to date has received limited personal requests from former IRS students for an extension. A current provision of the IRSSA is that any individuals who have missed the September 19, 2012 deadline must apply to the courts within their jurisdiction for consideration to be accepted into the IAP process.

Alleged Violations of the IRSSA and Financial Administration Act by Lawyers in the IAP

Under the terms of the IRSSA, the courts have a supervisory role in its implementation. The purpose of the courts' ongoing supervision is three-fold:

1. To protect the interests of absent class members;
2. To ensure the overarching principle that those to whom the settlement is intended to apply are treated fairly and equitably in the distribution of the award;
3. To ensure the timely and effective distribution of the benefits of the award by the Administrator of the Settlement.

On December 14, 2007, former Justice Brenner indicated that the IRSSA is clear and unambiguous, and it bans the assignment of any amounts payable under the Agreement.

Resolution 03/2012 calls on the AFN to support the Blood Tribe in their class action against Blott & Co. and Associates who have been alleged to arrange high interest loans for former IRS students which were inappropriately recouped from settlement funds. An assessment outlines that claimants have a valid legal action against Blott & Co. The AFN continues to provide support to the Blood Tribe leadership and liaise with claimants impacted as requested.

Two additional Requests for Direction have been filed by the Indian Residential School Adjudication Secretariat to investigate violations of the IRSSA and FAA in central interior of BC as well as Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Day Scholars & Day School Class Action

Joan Jack and Spiritwind continue to seek justice for Day School students and Day Scholars. The National Chief attended the 2012 and 2013 Day School Conferences in Manitoba in full support of Day Scholars and Day School students.

Tk'emlups te Secwepemc and Sechelt First Nation launched a class action for Day Scholars from their respective communities. National Chief Atleo attended various meetings in support of Day Scholars including the launch of the class action. In a recent federal court hearing, Canada attempted to dismiss the case and have the matter returned to provincial courts; the Judge disagreed. Canada has now filed an appeal of the Judge's ruling.

Commemoration Project

Resolution 26/2010 directed the AFN to work to ensure commemorative markers were in place for each and every Indian Residential School where First Nations children were placed. The AFN and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF) are working on a national framework to establish 141 commemorative plaques/monuments for each IRS recognized in the IRSSA.

Funding for this initiative provides for tasks performed both centrally and regionally – in and by communities and overseen by an Advisory Committee and Elders Advisory Committee. While the AFN resolution initially defines the project as one that is exclusively First Nations in character, as a national initiative the AFN acknowledges that many Inuit and Métis children attended Indian Residential Schools and their communities and families have experienced losses akin to those suffered by First Nations.

The AFN has established protocols with these organizations that may effectively lend to their active participation and support of the project. The AHF, as a partner, is also focused on healing the legacy of the residential schools for all those affected and as such is wholly inclusive in its approach. The AFN, AHF, Inuit and Métis are in agreement that all will be represented in the Steering Committee and Advisory Bodies, and in the design of the markers themselves.

Truth & Reconciliation Commission

The TRC was created through the IRSSA to produce and submit to the Parties of the Agreement a report including recommendations to the Government of Canada concerning the IRS system and experience including: the history, purpose, operation and supervision of the IRS system, the effect and consequences of IRS (including systemic harms, inter-generational consequences and the impact of human dignity) and the ongoing legacy of the residential schools.

All Party Leaders have been meeting to address various issues regarding fulfilment of the TRC's mandate. The TRC was scheduled to have completed its mandate by June 14, 2014; however, this is not possible.

The TRC issued an Interim Report in February of 2012 which contained 20 recommendations including: funding for increased public education, the need for resources to support the promotion of First Nations languages and cultures, enhancement of mental health support services, and using the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for working towards reconciliation between First Nations and all Canadians. The All Party Coordinating Committee continues to meet to advance recommendations contained in the interim report. A Document Collection Working Group continues efforts to ensure that all relevant documents are available to the TRC to carry out its mandate.

The All Party Committee re-established various working groups including the National Events Working Group (NEWG) to discuss national events and the final report.

National Chief Atleo and the AFN National Executive participated in the opening walk of the Montreal National TRC event on April 24, 2013. Two more national events are scheduled. The BC National Event will be held in Vancouver, September 18-20, 2013. The Alberta National Event is scheduled for March 27-30, 2014 in Edmonton, Alberta. The TRC indicates they will have a national closing event in Ottawa.

Reconciliation Canada, a charitable project to promote reconciliation by engaging Canadians in dialogue that revitalizes the relationship between Aboriginal people and all Canadians will hold reconciliation events. An All Nations Canoe Journey is scheduled for September 17, 2013 as well as a Walk for Reconciliation and a Multicultural Celebration event on September 22, 2013.



Health Supports

The Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program (IRS RHSP) provides mental health and emotional support services to former IRS students and their families before, during and after their participation in the Settlement Agreement processes. Health Canada continues to receive a \$65 million annual budget to deliver this program.

The closing of the AHF has had and continues to have a devastating impact on the health and well-being of former IRS students and their families.

Resolution 18/2012 requests that the AFN provide support and assistance to seek ways for the Healing Centre programs to continue their valuable work with former IRS students. The Healing Centres have experience a demand in services resulting from the IAP deadline as well as the TRC and Commemoration events, all which trigger trauma that requires treatment provided by the Centres.

The IAP process has provisions for post-IAP wellness plans that could include specialized treatment programming such as the programs offered by the Healing Centres. Current alcohol and drug treatment programming are not trained to deal with trauma related to Indian Residential School issues. Normally there are long waiting lists at alcohol and drug treatment programming before anyone can access the services.

The Healing Centres provide essential services to support healing, wellness and reconciliation among former IRS students, their families and within their communities.

Advocacy & Partnerships (APIP)

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) has cut most funding for the APIP program with the exception of the national organizations. Former IRS students still require regional supports as they navigate their way through a complex IAP process. The loss of regional funding puts greater pressure on the national organizations whose funding was also cut. The frustration felt by former IRS students and the families is not conducive to the overall goals of healing and reconciliation in the IRSSA.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continued support and advocacy for justice for Day Scholars and Day School students.
- Implementation by AFN and AHF of the commemoration initiative to establish markers at each IRS site by March 2014.
- Continued advocacy with and for the Healing Centres to meet the ongoing specialized treatment programming needs of former IRS students, especially with the IAP expected to extend its hearing and completion dates.
- Monitor implementation of the roll-out of the personal credits in the IRSSA.
- Continued advocacy, as directed by AFN Executive, to protect the interests of former IRS students in Requests for Direction with the courts.
- Continued engagement with the TRC and the All Parties Coordinating Committee in implementation of the Interim Report.

SAFE, SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

SSSC is comprised of areas supporting First Nation priorities in health, community and economic development, and safety of First Nations. SSSC spans a broad spectrum of activity aimed at supporting First Nations in their priorities to advance and increase First Nations' control over the development and delivery of programs, services, incentives, and policy development. Team activity generally includes:

- advocating for improved housing outcomes, increased resources for community infrastructure, and facilitating emergency management responses, mitigation, preparedness, and recovery;
- health policy analysis, communications, and advocacy to increase opportunities for First Nations to participate in and influence national health policy, health systems and programs. The critical objective driving this work is to support the protection, maintenance, promotion, support and advocate for the inherent, treaty and constitutional rights, (w)holistic health and well-being of our Nations; and
- supporting First Nation economic priorities and development principles, such as advancing sustainable/ responsible development, trade, procurement, and labour market/ labour force development.

In addition, SSSC provides technical support for AFN sustainability, sport, and taxation discussions.

HEALTH

The Health report is organized along the following headings: Strategic Policy, Public Health, Mental Wellness, Children and Youth, Information Management, and Primary Care. Health strategies and decisions are developed in partnership with the National First Nations Health Technicians Network (NFNHTN) and the Chiefs Committee on Health (CCOH).

1. STRATEGIC POLICY

Key areas of work within Health Strategic Policy include: the Health Canada – Public Health Agency of Canada – Assembly of First Nations – (HC-PHAC-AFN) Task Group, the Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiative (AHHRI) and the Health Services Integration Fund (HSIF). Strategic Policy interacts with many stakeholders including the First Nations Health Managers Association (FNHMA), and the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN).

A. HEALTH CANADA - PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA - ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS TASK GROUP (HC-PHAC-AFN TASK GROUP)

The purpose of the Task Group was to coordinate high level work on health and influence program and funding sustainability, program coherence and innovation, such as that of the multi-jurisdictional partnerships approach and providing an avenue for communication between the National Chief and the Minister of Health. Phase One was completed and an agreement was signed on January 13, 2009, between the National Chief and the Minister of Health initiating work under Phase Two (2009-2011). In November 2011, a joint letter was signed by the National Chief and the Minister of Health renewing the HC-PHAC-AFN Task Group on First Nations Health from 2011-2012. The Task Group mandate expired in September of 2012.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

In the lead-up to the mandate expiration, the AFN engaged with First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) management and technicians on renewing the workplan. Following that discussion, Task Group technicians from the three parties developed options for moving forward from which each party was to seek endorsement from their respective management. Despite early enthusiasm for renewal, FNIHB has not yet communicated its intention to recommit to the Task Force.

The AFN continues to seek an avenue to maintain a connection between the National Chief and the Minister of Health and to maintain a high level commitment to coordinated policy analysis and development and funding sustainability.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Find innovative ways to ensure AFN participation in high level policy discussions at FNIHB.
- Continue to press for regular meetings between the National Chief and the Minister of Health.

B. ABORIGINAL HEALTH HUMAN RESOURCES INITIATIVE (AHHRI)

AHHRI has been renewed for an additional five years from 2010-2015 at \$80 million. The renewed AHHRI is focused on a number of issues including increasing the number of trained and certified First Nations health managers and community-based workers. In the first two years of the renewed AHHRI, the AFN advocated and secured continued funding for established cultural competency projects.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The 2012 Federal Budget and the ongoing regionalization process at Health Canada have had significant impacts on the way that the AHHRI is managed and, as a result, on the way in which the AFN engages with the AHHRI file. The most significant change is that, apart from a few specific projects, projects are approved and funds are administered by the FNIHB regional offices, rather than at headquarters. In addition, following budget cuts there is no longer a national level steering committee.

Despite these challenges, the AFN continued to work alongside the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN) and the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada (ANAC) and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), among others, to develop a cultural competency guide for use in mainstream nursing schools.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- The AFN will continue to advocate for meaningful approach to cultural competency, where possible, at the national level.
- AHHRI is coming up for renewal in 2015. The AFN will continue to call for AHHRI renewal and work with FNIHB in securing renewal.

2. PUBLIC HEALTH

First Nations people suffer a disproportionately higher rate of morbidity across many diseases and higher mortality compared with the rest of Canadians. This disparity is a reflection of systemic, societal and individual factors that influence the health of our people. These influences are considered the broader determinants of health.

Public health focuses on the social, environmental and economic factors affecting health, as well as the communities and settings where people gather and live. Programs and services are designed to promote and protect health, and prevent injury and disease.



To improve the health of our people, we must begin to look past the mainstream interventions, recognizing that there may be validity to some of the suggestions, but begin to look at First Nations specific approaches. Approaches must reflect and respect First Nations autonomy, values and practices.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

AFN National Public Health Experts Advisory Committee (NPHEAC)

The AFN NPHEAC held two meetings in January and March 2013. These meetings focused on: identifying priority areas and actions required for the current fiscal year; discussing and identifying the core priority functions of public health at the AFN (population health assessment, health surveillance, health promotion, disease and injury prevention, and health protection including emergency preparedness and environmental health). In addition, the NPHEAC engaged in thorough discussions about the *First Nations Wholistic Policy and Planning Model* reaching consensus in regards to the model and the need to better reflect the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) within the First Nations context, as well as considering how they interact with external and internal factors to ultimately result in a three-dimensional representation of a wellness model. Development will take place over the next year.

Public Health Partnerships

The AFN Public Health policy area continues to establish relationships and collaborate with federal government departments and national organizations such as the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, PHAC, the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC) and the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada among others, to ensure the ongoing inclusion of First Nations in the development of new strategies to improve the health of First Nations.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Development of the AFN Wellness Model.
- Assist FNIHB with the development of tools, policies and strategies relevant to First Nations.
- Assist PHAC with the development of tools, policies and strategies relevant to First Nations.
- Continuation of the NPHEAC.
- Review, update and alignment of the AFN Public Health Framework and the AFN Health Plan.

A. CANCER

The incidence of cancer is rising faster in First Nations communities than in the general Canadian population. It is among the leading causes of death in some First Nations communities. While cancer was relatively rare in the past, common cancers such as breast, prostate, lung, and colorectal have increased remarkably over the last several decades in many First Nations communities. There is a potential for cancer to surpass diabetes as the number one killer of First Nations peoples.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN continues to work at a national level raising awareness of the cancer care continuum (risk factors/prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, recovery, end of life/palliative care) including engaging with the CPAC to facilitate collaborative multi-jurisdictional action toward shared cancer outcomes.

Working with CPAC since 2007 during its first five-year mandate, the AFN collaborated on development of the *First Nations, Inuit and Métis Action Plan on Cancer Control* including gathering information on the First Nation cancer patient journey, promising practices being used by First Nations to advance improved cancer control and a gaps analysis. This information gathering provided information about a number of culturally-responsive resources which are available on www.Cancerview.ca.

Advancing cancer control with and for First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities remains a strategic priority and funding has been identified to provide an initiative to address the gaps. This new multi-year initiative launched in April 2013 with a Call for Proposals on “First Nations, Inuit and Métis Cancer Control Initiative: Advancing Improvements in Continuity of Care for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Patients in Rural and Remote Communities”. This will primarily focus on diagnosis delivery and discharge planning including patient identification.

The AFN is represented on the Canadian Cancer Action Network (CCAN) board by a First Nations cancer survivor. CCAN’s priorities include playing a critical role in ensuring constructive and positive dialogue and development at both a provincial and national level. CCAN focuses on issues relevant to patients and empowers and encourages the cancer patient voice to be heard resulting in positive and quantifiable change. CCAN also works to establish a strong, active and recognized presence in each province and territory, cultivate and pursue opportunities for effective dialogue and interaction with stakeholders through education and awareness and establishing and implementing a strong and sustainable governance model.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to partner on the implementation of the *First Nations, Inuit and Métis Action Plan on Cancer Control* raising the profile of cancer as an emerging crisis for First Nations.
- Continue the development of resources such as a National Cancer Tool kit and the identification of best practices around Traditional Models of Care.

B. TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

TB is not just a public health issue; it is a social justice issue and a true marker of poverty. First Nations currently have rates of TB that are 31 times that of non-Aboriginal Canadians. Overcrowded housing, poor access to health care and food insecurity contribute greatly to this national disgrace.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Following the FNIHB release of the *Strategy Against Tuberculosis for First Nations On-Reserve* in 2012, the AFN has continued working with FNIHB in the performance measurement framework for TB programming, entitled *Monitoring the Performance of FNIHB TB Programming*.

The AFN continues to participate in the Prairie Wide Provincial Network Committee and the University of Alberta's Determinants of Tuberculosis Transmission project.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Completion and implementation of the Monitoring the Performance of FNIHB TB Programming.
- Dissemination of the findings from the Determinants of Tuberculosis Transmission project.

D. PANDEMIC PLANNING AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Health Emergency Preparedness has been a top priority for First Nations communities since the H1N1 pandemic. The AFN has been actively engaged with key stakeholders in an effort to ensure that all First Nations have access to appropriate prevention and treatment responses for any future health emergency.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN continues to participate in and support the work of the First Nations Emergency Management Network (EMnet).

The AFN has prepared a rationale on the need to add a health assessment and coordination component to the Aboriginal and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) all hazards plan emergency plan.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to support EMnet.
- Engagement of partners to develop the health component of the AANDC all hazards emergency plan.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The physical environment is an important determinant of health. At certain levels of exposure, contaminants in the air, water, food, and soil can cause a variety of adverse health effects. As well, in the built environment, factors related to housing, indoor air quality and the design of communities and transportation systems can significantly influence one's physical and psychological well-being.

It is widely recognized that First Nations are at a higher risk of exposure than the general population because of their closer ties to the land. The AFN recognizes the importance of preventing disease through environmental public health stewardship.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN continues to act as Principal Investigator to the Food, Nutrition and Environment Study (FNFNES), a multiyear study that aims to work with over 100 First Nations communities and report on current traditional and store bought food use; food security issues; content of traditional foods for nutrient values and environmental contaminants; content of drinking water for trace metals; and, the amount and type of pharmaceuticals and their metabolites in surface water.

The AFN also continues to provide technical support to the First Nations Biomonitoring Initiative, which has entered the final national report stage.

The AFN will continue to provide information and input on emerging issues in First Nations communities related to Environmental Public Health, working collaboratively with partners to address linkages between climate change, environmental health, traditional knowledge, and traditional foods.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Raise awareness of environmental health issues among First Nations leaders and community members.
- Communication to First Nations communities and leadership on emerging environmental public health issues.
- Continue participation as Principal Investigator on the FNFNES.
- Support the release and dissemination of the national results for the FNBI.
- Support the development of FNBI phase 2 proposal.

F. FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Food security exists when there is a comprehensive continuum of resources in a community's food system. The continuum of resources ranges from those providing short-term relief of acute food insecurity, to those that build the capacity of the community to feed itself, to strategies that redesign the food system toward a more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable model. Therefore, actions must be taken to tackle the socio-economic and cultural barriers to opportunities for those living on reserve that result in not enjoying fully the right to adequate food.

The AFN works on ensuring and increasing First Nations participation in the development of food security related policy and initiatives in collaboration with FNIHB, PHAC, AANDC, the First Nations regional organizations, and other stakeholders.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

As per Resolution 78/2010, the AFN continues to monitor the progress of AANDC and Health Canada (HC) in the development and implementation of the Nutrition North Canada (NNC) program. AANDC has initiated their year one evaluation of the program, independently from HC, which is also undertaking a

year one evaluation of the education component of the NNC. The AFN did not participate in the AANDC evaluation due to improper engagement.

The AFN continues to participate on the Food Security Reference Group (FSRG) to ensure collaboration towards improved food security for First Nations and Inuit.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to participate in HC evaluation of the NNC program.
- Explore the relationships between food security, environmental health and mental health.

G. INJURY PREVENTION

Injuries are a major cause of morbidity and mortality in First Nations communities especially among youth and young adults. Injury prevention is concerned with modifying behavioral or contextual factors that place First Nations at greater risk for unintentional injury, morbidity and mortality from injuries when they occur.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN continues to work at a national level on raising awareness of injuries and their impact, building capacity for communities to carry out injury prevention work and relationship development with the goal of addressing programming gaps and the adaptation of existing injury prevention programming/guidelines.

Due to the lack of funding for injury prevention, activities have focused on exploring new partnerships and working with current partners to maximize knowledge exchange and resource utilization. Some of the activities include the promotion of and participation in the planning committee for the upcoming Canadian Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Conference in November 2013, where the AFN has a co-lead on the Aboriginal Stream of the conference which will include First Nations, Inuit and Métis speakers, workshops, presentations, and research.

The AFN continues to work and collaborate with its internal units and external stakeholders, in achieving the identified need and as mandated by Resolution 66/2012 to develop a high-level overarching Injury Prevention Framework. In addition, the AFN continues to work on the renewal of the partnership with the Canadian Red Cross (CRC).

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Explore the development of the First Nations Injury Prevention Framework.
- Continue ongoing work on the renewal of the AFN-CRC statement of partnership.
- Continue to develop evidence on injury prevention, including the collection of community-based stories on successes with injury prevention activities.

H. HIV/AIDS AND SEXUAL HEALTH

First Nations continue to be overrepresented in Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and Blood Borne Infections (BBIs) and are acquiring HIV at a disproportionately higher rate than the general Canadian population. In particular, the rate among First Nations women and young adults (under 30 years of age) are much higher than those observed in Canada. As well, two-thirds of new infections are acquired through injection drug use; a proportion that is two times higher than that seen in Canada overall.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN continues to implement the HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health communication plans with a focus on youth-oriented mediums. In partnership with the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) for Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week (AAAW), the National Chief recorded a public service announcement that was disseminated through YouTube and the AAAW website and was featured in CAAN's poster campaign.

The AFN continues to explore partnerships that can support and strengthen advocacy efforts to develop a First Nations National Sexual Health Strategy, that address the unique dynamic and needs of First Nations.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to work with the AFN National Youth Council (NYC) regarding sexual health activities.
- Continue to explore partnerships that can facilitate the development of a First Nations National Sexual Health Strategy.
- Continue to support and collaborate with CAAN, including support in planning AAAW.

I. IMMUNIZATION

Vaccines are proven to reduce the burden of disease, many of them potentially fatal, during childhood and adulthood, thus improving life and health quality and representing one of the most cost-effective public health interventions.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN continues to work with FNIHB's Communicable Disease Working Group and the Health Information, Analysis and Research Division in order to provide guidance, advocate and influence program-related decisions.

The AFN continues working with FNIHB in the development and implementation of a social marketing campaign aimed at young parents and decision-makers promoting the importance of immunization. This initiative is strongly based on the use of social media and electronic distribution channels such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, as well as printed materials and DVDs.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to monitor trends on immunization status.

J. DIABETES

The rate of diabetes is three to five times higher for First Nations than the general Canadian population. Rates of diabetes among First Nations are expected to rise significantly in the future given that risk factors such as obesity, physical inactivity and unhealthy eating patterns are also increasing.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Due to the lack of funding for diabetes, activities have focused around exploring new partnerships and working with current partners to maximize knowledge exchange and resource utilization. As part of the changes in funding, the AFN First Nations Diabetes Working Group is no longer operational and was streamlined into a broader Public Health Expert Advisory Committee.

The Government of Canada is in year three of a five-year mandate for the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (ADI) to continue supporting health promotion and diabetes prevention activities and services. The ADI supports training for 300 community diabetes workers. The ADI features four areas of enhanced focus, including; initiatives for children, youth, parents and families; diabetes in pre-pregnancy and pregnancy; community-led food security planning to improve access to healthy foods, including traditional and market foods; and enhanced training for health professionals on clinical practice guidelines and chronic disease management strategies. The AFN advocates through the ADI Capacity Building Advisory Committee.

Just Move it – Canada (JMI) has been operational since March 2012 providing a web-based database of First Nations and Inuit community-based physical activity and healthy living programs across Canada (www.justmoveit.org/jmicanada). JMI partnered with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), Indian Health Services - Healthy Native Community Partners in the United States and FNIHB. The National Aboriginal Diabetes Association (NADA) has made a request to the AFN to become an official partner in the Canadian Just Move it (JMI) Initiative. NADA has played a key role during this partnership providing much administration of the partnership, coordination of materials, workshops, and the adding of new projects/updates to the website.

The AFN has partnered on the Canadian Institutes of Health Research approved proposal for the research of TransFORMATION of IndiGENous PrimAry HEAlthcare Delivery (FORGE AHEAD) led by the University of Western Ontario. The research aims to improve the processes and quality of data and collection and surveillance in First Nations communities.

The Canadian Diabetes Association is engaging Canadians in the development of a Diabetes Charter for Canada. They intend to develop a Diabetes Charter to articulate a common vision and expectations, define roles and responsibilities, and to develop standards to hold governments accountable for diabetes care and support. The AFN is providing input into the process to inform the development of the Charter to be released November 14 World Diabetes Day.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to raise the profile of diabetes amongst First Nations and nationally to explore promising evidence-based policy and research initiatives including a Social Determinant of Health perspective.
- Advocate for the renewal investments to ensure the continued investment in ADI.
- Continue to promote and seek sustainable funding for the JMI initiative.

K. TOBACCO

Misuse of commercial tobacco has been shown to be a major risk factor of chronic diseases. Smoking increases the risk for diabetes by 50 per cent and First Nations experience rates of diabetes 3 to 4 times higher than general Canadian population.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN National First Nation Tobacco Control Strategy Action Plan produced in 2011 did not receive any funding for implementation. Instead, the AFN monitors the First Nations and Inuit Component of the Federal Tobacco Control Strategy (FNICFTCS) of the renewed Federal Tobacco Control Strategy that was announced to provide approximately \$22 million over a five-year period to a targeted number of First Nations and Inuit communities that have the capacity and willingness to implement a range of tobacco control measures. The AFN expressed concerns to the government about the inadequate engagement, unilateral process and essential criteria with specific concerns about the mandatory components that interfere with First Nations jurisdiction and self-governance on tobacco control such as pricing, revenue reinvestment and taxation. The response from the Minister of Health did not address the concerns.

Follow up continues on the 2012 Special Chiefs Assembly resolution that recommends First Nations refrain from participating in the FNICFTCS unless those criteria are removed and appropriate engagement occurs. The AFN is also conducting full legal analysis.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Provide continued advocacy, policy direction and advice on tobacco issues with particular focus on the infringement of rights including providing a legal analysis of the concerns.

3. MENTAL WELLNESS

Priority areas within Mental Wellness include: the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (NAYSPS), National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP), Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Supports Program (IRS RHSP), Brighter Futures and Building Healthy Communities Program and the First Nations & Inuit Mental Wellness Advisory Committee (MWAC). Work consists of the development of a First Nations driven agenda, advocacy within federally funded programs and initiatives, and advocacy of First Nations engagements in national initiatives, including the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) and the Prescription Drug Abuse Coordinating Committee (PDACC).

Specific resolutions which fall within the mental wellness mandate include:

- Resolution 55/2012: Mental Wellness as a National Priority
- Resolution 57/2011: Support for Akwesasne Leadership in Addressing State of Crisis Regarding Substance Abuse
- Resolution 6/2010: Protecting the Rights of Former Indian Residential Schools Survivors in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement
- Resolution 60/2010: Ratification of Renewed Program Framework for the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) and Youth Solvent Addiction Program (YSAP)
- Resolution 5/2009: Suicide Intervention and Prevention

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

A. MENTAL WELLNESS

The AFN Mental Wellness Committee (MWC) was established as mandated by the National First Nations Health Technicians Network (NFNHTN) in April 2010. The MWC provides technical expertise and knowledge and shares information on mental wellness. The last meeting of the MWC was held on March 13-14, 2013.

The AFN continues to be a key partner on the First Nations & Inuit Mental Wellness Advisory Committee (MWAC). The MWAC has most recently been working towards the final approval of the Strategic Action Plan and creating next steps for the committee. The AFN has begun work with key partners to design a process to describe a coordinated continuum of mental wellness, specifically with respect to Health Canada's mental wellness programming for First Nations. Guided by the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Advisory Committee, this process will confirm a comprehensive mapping of existing mental wellness programs including a common understanding of program strengths and gaps and identification of emerging priorities. It will culminate in a comprehensive framework of mental wellness services that outlines opportunities to build on community strengths and control of resources, to strengthen existing mental wellness programming for First Nations communities.

Regional discussion sessions started in the fall 2012, and will continue into spring 2013. The discussion sessions are engaging community members, regional and national experts and bringing them together to discuss mental wellness and recommend an approach for a continuum of First Nations mental wellness services, as well as, identifying strengths, gaps, overlaps, and areas for improvement within current First Nations mental wellness programming.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) released the Mental Health Strategy for Canada on May 8, 2012. The strategy is made up of six strategic directions. Although each of the six can be adapted to suit First Nations, Strategic Direction #5 - *Recognizing the Distinct Cultures and Mental Health Needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis*, outlines the key importance of distinction-based programming within mental health. The AFN worked closely with the MHCC in the development of Strategic Direction #5.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- A follow-up gathering of the AFN MWC will be held.
- Development of a comprehensive First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework will be completed by December 2013.
- The AFN will work closely with the MHCC to draw on links with existing mental wellness programming and assist (where possible) with the strategy implementation.

B. SUICIDE PREVENTION

As a part of upstream renewals, the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (NAYSPS) was renewed for an additional five years (2010-2015). The AFN's efforts have now focused on advocating for evaluation summation that reports findings, supports increases and enhancement past 2015, and promotes mental wellness, community empowerment and youth leadership at the community level.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN continued to participate on the Canada - United States of America (USA) Memorandum of Understanding on Indigenous Health between Health Canada and the USA Department of Health and Human Services. The overarching goal is sharing knowledge and discussing opportunities for collaboration among those working on behalf of and with American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States and with First Nations and Inuit peoples in Canada to prevent youth suicide.

The AFN continues to advocate for community-led suicide intervention programming that is inclusive of holistic and cultural approaches to mental wellness.

The AFN has produced and disseminated a Mental Wellness Storybook that showcases positive mental wellness. Youth, Elders and community members submitted artwork, stories and poems that supported mental wellness and healthy lifestyles.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Seek funding for another AFN Youth Mental Wellness Forum.
- Continue to advocate for programming that is reflective of First Nations culture and the holistic views of wellness.



C. ADDICTIONS

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

In partnership with the National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation (NNAPF) and Health Canada, the AFN continues to be a key partner in the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) Renewal Process. The NNADAP Renewal Process has been exceptional in taking an approach to developing a renewed program framework that is informed by culture, evidence and needs. The renewed program framework is unique in taking a systematic approach to supporting First Nations in addressing addictions prevention and treatment needs. The AFN continues to work in partnership with NNAPF and Health Canada (HC) on the NNADAP Renewal Leadership Team. The Leadership Team is responsible for advising on the transition and change management from renewal through to implementation and dissemination.

The AFN co-chairs the Prescription Drug Abuse Coordinating Committee (PDACC). Originally a committee internal to FNIHB-HC, the committee was expanded to include the AFN, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) and NNAPF, after the Deputy Minister of HC directed FNIHB to work in partnership with First Nations, the provinces and territories and the above organizations. The committee has met five times over the course of the fiscal year and has developed a work plan to outline key projects and initiatives taking place over the immediate, medium and long term.

In addition to the work being done by PDACC, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA), in partnership with the Coalition on Prescription Drug Misuse (Alberta) and the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, has lead the development of a National Prescription Drug Misuse Strategy for Canada. The AFN provided support and guidance throughout the development of the Strategy. The Strategy, entitled, *First Do No Harm: Responding to Canada's Prescription Drug Crisis*, was developed around five streams of action: prevention, education, treatment, monitoring and surveillance, and enforcement. Together, these action streams aim to prevent prescription drug-related harms to individuals, families and communities; educate and empower the public and promote healthy and safe communities; and promote appropriate prescribing and dispensing practices among healthcare practitioners, all while providing a contextual lens to First Nations, geographically remote, isolated, and rural populations. The Strategy was released in April 2013.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to work with the NNAPF and HC in the dissemination of the NNADAP Renewal Framework and ongoing presentation of the NNADAP Renewed Program Framework to First Nations communities, professionals and associations working with First Nations in the area of addictions.
- Continue to participate on the PDACC, as a co-chair.
- Continue to advocate for short-term and immediate support for communities struggling with PDA that is culturally-competent, holistic and safe.
- Work with the CCSA and partners on the dissemination and implementation of the National Strategy on PDA.

D. MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS FOR INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVORS

The AFN has advocated for thorough provision of mental health supports for survivors, their families and communities throughout all components of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

In 2009, HC was instructed to provide mental health support at all Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) national and community events. As a result, the AFN has focused on advising HC on the provision of mental health supports and planning for safe spaces through participation on the Resolution Health Supports Advisory Committee (RHSAC), participation at the regional level through Regional Implementation Working Groups and a direct working relationship with the mental wellness health support planning team. Through participation on these working groups and strong relationships with FNIHB, the AFN has also been directly advising FNIHB on various components of the Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program and TRC event planning.

In June 2012, the fourth National Truth and Reconciliation event took place in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The AFN was present for the two-day training leading up to the event and the four-day event. The AFN also worked closely with Health Canada and the TRC in planning the fifth National TRC Event in Montreal, April 24-27, 2013. In addition, the AFN is providing ongoing support and guidance to Health Canada and TRC workers and has been working closely with each group as the British Columbia TRC event draws near.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continued participation on the RHSAC, tasked with advising HC on mental health support planning for TRC events and activities.

4. CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The AFN continues to advocate at the regional, national and international levels for increased culturally-appropriate prevention and intervention strategies and programming that will lead to improved outcomes for First Nations children and youth.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

The AFN continues to advocate for children's health issues at all levels of government despite the dissolution of the Childhood and Youth Division at FNIHB, and a reduced capacity of AFN staff as a result of cuts to children's health in the 2012 budget.



A. JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

The AFN developed and released a Jordan's Principle (JP) Report Card with the assistance of the NFNHTN and other key informants. The AFN continues to advocate for a collaborative approach and to discuss ongoing/emerging issues regarding the implementation of Jordan's Principle. The AFN continues to establish partnerships with service providers' organizations and regulatory bodies that can maximize advocacy efforts and education of front line workers and service providers.

B. CHILDHOOD OBESITY

With the recent Regional Health Survey (RHS) data demonstrating an alarming increase in childhood obesity rates, the AFN has made addressing the childhood obesity epidemic a priority. The AFN has been developing a new report entitled, *Healthy Beginnings for Today, Tomorrow & the Future*, featuring community-based interviews that will serve to provide a better understanding of the key issues, best practices and challenges surrounding children and healthy eating, physical activity and food security in First Nations communities.

C. CHILDREN'S NUTRITION

The AFN continues to raise awareness of the need for a universal school nutrition program and promote organizations such as ONEXONE and the National First Nations Breakfast Program.

D. PARTNERSHIPS

Working in partnership with other non-governmental organizations such as the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS) ensures that the issues that affect First Nations children remain a priority with the federal government. The AFN continues to be an active member of the CPS First Nations/Inuit/Métis Health Committee and participated in a site visit of the Six Nations community in February 2013. The AFN was also a member of the planning committee and attended the 5th International Meeting on Indigenous Children's Health (IMICH) in Portland, Oregon April 19-21, 2013.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- With the re-organization of the Childhood and Youth Division (CYD) at FNIHB, the AFN will continue to adapt to these changes to ensure that First Nations child health issues remain addressed. The AFN will continue to advocate on behalf of First Nations children.
- The AFN will continue to assist with the Renewal of the Upstream Investments, including the Maternal Child Health (MCH) Program.
- The AFN will be translating the Childhood Obesity report and making it readily available for First Nations communities.

- The AFN will continue to increase partnerships with high profile organizations such as CPS, UNICEF and ONEXONE and other non-governmental organizations to ensure increased advocacy for the improved health of First Nations children and youth.
- The AFN will continue to advocate for implementation of Jordan's Principle, including recommendations from the Jordan's Principle Report Card.

5. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT / E-HEALTH

Recent years have seen investments in eHealth on the part of Canada Health Infoway (Infoway) and provincial/territorial ministries of health. In part because of jurisdictional uncertainties, these initiatives have tended to exclude First Nations health services. While Health Canada has made modest investments in First Nations initiatives, sustainable infrastructure and support investments for First Nations communities have lagged behind. First Nations are keenly aware of the importance of leading the eHealth revolution.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

A. NATIONAL EHEALTH CONVERGENCE FORUM

On June 20, 2012, the AFN cohosted a National eHealth Convergence Forum with Canada's Health Informatics Association (COACH), with support from Health Canada and Infoway. The Forum provided provincial/territorial Chief Information Officers (CIOs) a First Nations eHealth perspective, as well as provided a platform to share principles and best practices in eHealth integration, data-sharing, Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) conformity, and interoperability efforts. Following the event, Forum organizers developed and published an Event Report summarizing the discussions and opportunities going forward. This report served as the backbone for a very positive article written by John Schinbein, the recently-retired Executive Director of the Canadian Telehealth Forum, for the magazine *Healthcare Information Management & Communications Canada*.

In addition, the AFN testified in front of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health (HESA) on the importance of eHealth for First Nations and the need for new and sustainable eHealth investments. As a result, HESA Chair and Conservative Member of Parliament (MP) Joy Smith, wrote an article in *The Hill-Times* (February 4, 2013) citing the importance of eHealth in First Nations, and highlighting the collaborative work of the AFN and COACH (Canada's Health Informatics Association) in hosting the First Nations eHealth Convergence Forum. Further, a similarly positive article appeared in the February 28, 2013 edition of *Technology for Doctors Online*.

Resolution 06/2012 calls for the renewal of FNIHB's eHealth program. This resolution made up part of the FNIHB business case for renewal.

B. AFN FIRST NATIONS EHEALTH STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

This year, the AFN, with direction and input from the National eHealth Advisory Committee (NeHAC), developed the AFN First Nations eHealth Strategy Framework. The Framework aims to accelerate the development, implementation and adoption of eHealth initiatives by Canada's First Nations. It articulates how First Nations eHealth strategies can align with F/P/T eHealth strategies and demonstrates the need for appropriate levels of investment by F/P/T jurisdictions. The Framework will be promoted to eHealth stakeholders nationwide this year.

C. DATA SHARING AGREEMENT TEMPLATE AND GUIDELINES

Following a recommendation from the AFN National eHealth Policy Forum Outcomes Report, the AFN has developed a Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) Template and Guideline. First Nations generated DSAs ensure that First Nations concerns are addressed in ways that also allow interoperability with F/P/T applications. The Framework will be promoted to eHealth stakeholders nationwide this year.

D. NATIONAL EHEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NEHAC)

NeHAC continues to play an integral role in setting the AFN's eHealth agenda. For example, NeHAC provided key input into the development of both the First Nations eHealth Strategy Framework and the DSA Guide.

NEXT STEPS- MOVING FORWARD

- Promote the AFN First Nations eHealth Strategy Framework.
- Promote the DSA Template and Guidelines.
- Continue to support the regions to work with the provinces and territories to develop sustainable, interoperable eHealth applications.
- Continue NeHAC meetings to facilitate implementation of eHealth Strategic Planning Forum recommendations.
- Strengthen the AFN's relationship with eHealth stakeholders including COACH, Infoway and F/P/T partners.

6. PRIMARY CARE / HEALTH BENEFITS

A. NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS (NIHB)

The NIHB Program provides benefit coverage for registered Indians and recognized Inuit on a limited range of medically necessary health-related goods and services that include pharmacy (certain prescription and over the counter drugs), medical supplies and equipment, vision care, dental services, medical transportation, crisis counseling, and approved services out of the country (for students and migrant workers). Directed by Resolution 24/2012, the AFN has been calling on NIHB to work with First Nations

to develop and conduct a joint review of the program in order to articulate shortcomings and identify potential efficiencies.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

In addition to the 2012 Budget reductions and pre-existing funding shortfalls, coupled with First Nations population growth and the increase in registrations from Bill C-3 (in response to the *McIvor* case) and the recently recognized Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation, the struggle to meet the demand for services, particularly those of NIHB, continue to be an issue. In the AFN's 2011 pre-budget submission, it was estimated that an additional \$376 million in 2012-2013, and \$805 million over the next five years, would be required to meet the existing shortfall, as well as anticipated demands from new registrants.

The federal government's Economic Action Plan 2013 proposed continuing funding for the NIHB program. The AFN continues to press Health Canada (HC) for specifics regarding the proposed funding for NIHB (and Nursing) in the Economic Action Plan.

The First Nations Caucus on NIHB (the Caucus) held a preparatory meeting in October 2012, in advance of the joint meeting with the NIHB Regional Management team. Based on the political and policy climate at the FNIHB, the AFN recommended a three-pronged approach to advocating for improvements to the NIHB program. Advocacy is targeted firstly at a policy level (i.e., improving NIHB policies aimed at increased patient services and outcomes); secondly, at more fundamental issues such as the disparity in A-Base funding; and, thirdly, in calling for a meeting between the National Chief and the Health Minister aimed at creating the political momentum to improve NIHB and undertake the proposed collaborative review of the NIHB program. To date, the AFN has not received a response from the Health Minister or FNIHB.

The Caucus continues to meet annually with the NIHB Regional Management in efforts to push for solutions-based approaches to NIHB issues and concerns. The 2012 joint meeting focused on three mutually agreed priority items including payer of last resort enforcement/coordination of benefits, concerns around the provision of prosthetics and orthotics, and NIHB's move to centralize dental. The Caucus made specific demands that called for the provision of written copies of the payer of last resort/coordination of benefit policies and the development of a communications protocol; an NIHB decision-making flow chart; and, a concerted effort from NIHB to develop sustainable Navigator funding from the national envelope. In addition, all parties made commitments to improve communications. A series of bi-lateral and follow-up meetings continue with the senior NIHB Management officials.

The AFN continues to meet with the Senior Management Committee (SMC), formally known as the Branch Executive Committee (BEC), and its new Associate Deputy Minister (ADM) of Health. The new ADM holds extensive experience with the Department of Finance having led several federal budgets since 2005. The ADM expressed an interest in addressing the funding challenges of the NIHB program. The AFN continues to work with the ADM to push for strategic opportunities to address the NIHB funding shortfalls and to undertake a collaborative review of NIHB that will examine both funding disparities and issues of policy, particularly in relation to other federally-funded health plans.

The AFN continues to address a number of acute issues with the NIHB program that surfaced in December 2012, most notably the NIHB claims system disruption that lasted for five days. Correspondence to the Health Minister requested analysis, review and recommendations related to the claims system failure to ensure it never happens again and to ensure that the appropriate safeguards are in place, including a call for a comprehensive report that addresses the root cause of the systems failure. To date, NIHB/FNIHB has indicated that the outage had no impact on the quality or availability of utilization or expenditure data. The AFN continues to push for a full report to be completed by Express Scripts Canada (ESC) which identifies the root cause of the systems failure. ESC administers the Health Information and Claims Processing Services (HICPS) system on behalf of the NIHB Program.

Additional concerns included a privacy breach that occurred in February 2012 when dental claims information for 381 NIHB clients that was stored on a Health Canada laptop was stolen from a car. The AFN continues to demand that HC identify the appropriate safeguards and measures taken to remedy the serious privacy breach including a letter in writing that identifies the precise data that was compromised (i.e., treaty number, addresses, SIN, provincial/territorial health card numbers).

The AFN continues to address insufficient communication in a number of areas, in particular related to the new regulations on benzodiazepines as part of the larger NIHB Prescription Drug Abuse (PDA) Strategy. The AFN addressed concerns related to the process in which decisions were taken and communicated, as well as the need for NIHB to provide a rationale on how/why these decisions are determined. The AFN continues to demand a concrete communications protocol and commitment to tangible steps to work collaboratively to better understand and inform the NIHB decision-making process. Ongoing bi-lateral discussions with NIHB-FNIHB reviewed respective and joint priorities for fiscal year 2013-2014, including a continued focus on the British Columbia Tripartite process, as well as the PDA Strategy and collaborative efforts with FNIHB to share NIHB data to better inform policy development.

Resolution 24/2012 called for a moratorium on cuts to the NIHB program until such time as the AFN and NIHB can conduct a joint review of NIHB in order to articulate shortcomings and identify potential efficiencies. The AFN also called in writing for a meeting between the National Chief and the Health Minister to begin discussions on conducting a comprehensive joint review of the NIHB program.

The AFN continues to sit as observers on the NIHB Drugs and Therapeutics Advisory Committee (DTAC) which provides recommendations for formulary changes to the NIHB Drug Benefits list. DTAC was provided with AFN Resolution 57/2012 which directed that NIHB not include the generic form of Oxycodone on the NIHB Drug Benefit List. Subsequently, through HC and the DTAC process, the team of medical professionals recommended that the generic form of Oxycodone not be listed on the Drug Benefit List, and that Oxy-Neo remain an exception benefit. NIHB has followed the DTAC recommendation to delist generic Oxycontin and Tylenol No. 4. The Committee also recommended that IV eperidine be delisted and be made an exclusion for all clients, and that oral meperidine be delisted and be made an exclusion for new clients. It was recommended that coverage be continued for existing clients as an interim measure. It was also recommended that the NIHB program continue approving oral bisphosphonates as auto approval drugs. The Program will monitor utilization of short acting opioids and bring utilization data back

to the committee. DTAC also met to review and discuss formulary changes to the Rheumatoid Arthritis criteria regarding the use of disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs). The recommendation was made to allow greater flexibility for providers to adjust the type of medications and doses based on patient response. Oral chemotherapy agents for renal carcinoma were also reviewed and the recommendation was made to cover the most effective (proven) medications.

The Canadian Dental Association (CDA) and NIHB Technical Working Group met to discuss dental policies, dental centralization and dental expenditures for 2012-2013. Further to this, the AFN and CDA met to discuss a more coordinated approach on NIHB related issues including discussions on engaging in a formal Statement of Partnership. The CDA also agreed to engage with the AFN in calling for full and meaningful participation in the evaluation of Dental Centralization. The AFN also accompanied the CDA for a day on Parliament Hill and met with parliamentary officials to advocate for the reduction of the inequalities regarding access, service and difference in per capita expenditure for First Nations. The AFN also spoke to the need to embrace the Teeth for Life Framework and, alongside the CDA, advocate for changes to the NIHB policies to reduce wait times for procedures, administrative burdens and delays and increasing the number of procedures aimed at saving teeth and improving oral health. The AFN also had the opportunity to emphasize the importance of increasing preventative services regarding oral health.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Ongoing advocacy to address the current NIHB funding shortfalls and overall improvements to the NIHB program.
- Ongoing communication with FNIHB's senior officials/committees and the NIHB Benefits Management team, including follow-up on the action items developed at the Joint NIHB Regional Management meeting held October 25, 2012, on payer of last resort enforcement, coordination of benefits and concerns around the provision of prosthetics and orthotics and NIHB's move to centralize dental.

B. HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE

Established in 1999, the First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care Program (FNIHCCP) was designed to assist First Nations and Inuit communities to meet the increasing home care demands of community members living with chronic and acute illnesses. This in-home care enables First Nations to receive the required care in familiar surroundings and for the person requiring the care to be close to family, friends and community as long as possible to maintain some personal independence.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Evaluation

Under Health Canada's 5-year Departmental Evaluation Plan, the FNIHCCP has been undergoing a program evaluation that is to be completed by fall, 2013. The HCC Evaluation Process includes the following: Planning Phase (June 2011-August 2012); Conduct Phase (August 2012 - December 2012); Report Finalization Phase (January 2013 - fall 2013); and Post-Approval Phase (fall 2013 - on). A draft

evaluation report was received by AFN at the end of March, 2013 and initial feedback was provided by the First Nations Home Care Partners.

Strategic Planning

From March 21-22, 2013, the AFN and First Nations partners attended the First Nations and Inuit Home & Community Care Program (FNIHCCP) Strategic Business Plan Session which was intended to develop and prioritize a 10-year strategy. The AFN presented First Nations priorities as they relate to HCC and submitted the AFN Ten Year Strategic Planning Report to incorporate into the overall FNIHCCP Strategic Business Plan.

Integration

The AFN and the First Nations Assisted Living Working Group (FNALWG) were brought together in March 2013 to discuss issues affecting the Assisted Living (AL) Program funded by AANDC, including the potential transfer of the AL “in-home care” component to Health Canada’s Home and Community Care Program (HCC). The proposed transfer has been delayed with no indication of whether it will go ahead, and the FNALWG is now engaging AANDC in discussions over the impacts this proposed transfer would have at the grassroots level. The AFN continues to push for inclusion in discussions between AANDC and Health Canada on the issue of integration, institutional care and reporting. There is also a need for improved communications to First Nations communities so they can make informed decisions as to whether integration will work for their community.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- HCC nurses have requested AFN support in both prioritizing palliative care and advocating to have palliative care classified as one of the essential service elements of the program, along with accompanying, sustainable funding.
- HCC nurses have expressed increasing concerns that diminishing formularies, poorer-quality equipment and lengthy approval processes are impacting their patient care, as they are spending too much time dealing with administrative issues pertaining to NIHB. The AFN will be increasing communications between FN HCC Partners and the NIHB Caucus.
- The AFN will continue to advocate for Elders/seniors’ health needs as our growing population ages.

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS

The Economic Partnerships portfolio focuses on Economic Development, Resource Revenue Sharing options, Labour Force and Human Resources Development, Connectivity, and Taxation. In the past several years, the Chiefs-in-Assembly have passed national resolutions addressing each of these matters. In line with revenue options and revenue sharing, the Chiefs-in-Assembly have also called for support toward specific First Nations gaming structures being coordinated in regions.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Resource Revenue Sharing

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has been involved in discussions to reconsider the past proposal for a task force to alternatively focus on resource equity, benefits and revenue. In consideration of ongoing First Nation priorities, there is an opportunity to focus an initiative on resource equity, benefit sharing and revenue sharing, following the direction and priorities put forward by Chiefs and those raised at the January 11, 2013 meeting with the Prime Minister.

An original jointly developed proposal was to examine a broad range of issues pertaining to First Nations' economies, including: economic growth and trade; responsible development related to major resource projects including lands issues; jobs, human resources and labour force development; and additional subjects considered to be important to issues impacting First Nation economies. The original subject areas are now being refocused in order to prioritize natural resource development issues and topics, and subsequent economic opportunities for First Nations.

A new mandate is proposed to be implemented over at least a six month period with a likely closing of January 2014. A joint work plan, scheduled reporting, and communications building toward recommendations will help frame the early efforts of the initiative. In 2012/13, the AFN also compiled in a report titled, "Resource Revenue Sharing with First Nations" to outline the elements to begin developing workable models for resource sharing.

Virtual Resource Centre on Indigenous Energy and Mining (VRC)

The establishment of a VRC was first proposed at the AFN International Indigenous Summit on Energy and Mining (IISEM), held June 2011 in Niagara Falls and later supported through Resolution 25/2011. The VRC proposes to make information available to support First Nations interested in mining and energy projects – and facilitate information needs for other Indigenous communities. The VRC proposes to bring together North American Indigenous involvement, corporate, financial, and academic communities to ensure advice and information is available to First Nation communities considering projects in these sectors.

In addition to general information, such as profiles of First Nation communities and territories, the VRC will include information on development processes; free, prior and informed consent examples; natural

resources/deposits details; industry developments and current stages; benefit sharing scenarios and negotiations; financing and market information; and expert resources.

The work toward this project has included the completion of a concept paper, discussion paper and an environmental scan. Work to date has been shared with the National Congress of American Indians to continue to welcome participation from tribal nations and to complement their work toward a virtual resource centre project.

For the interim, the AFN provides advocacy, where directed, in support of First Nations' interest in energy projects, most notably green, renewable energy. Advocacy for First Nation involvement in energy will continue through the work towards establishing the VRC. Regional Chief Cameron Alexis (Alberta) has been invited to present at the Developing Tribal Energy Resources & Economies Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 17-20, 2013.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) funded an environmental scan for a VRC that was completed and submitted in January, 2013. The AFN has subsequently submitted proposals to federal sources for funding this work forward.

Human Resource Development

The First Nation Technical Working Group on Human Resources Development (TWG) last met in Ottawa on May 14-15, 2013. The TWG regularly meets with federal officials to discuss issues related to the operationalization of the Aboriginal Skills Employment Training Strategy (ASETS).

Currently, the TWG is waiting for more details in regard to the on-reserve First Nations Jobs Fund that was announced in the March 2013 federal budget.

Of the issues examined by the TWG, key discussion topics include planning for the next five-year strategic initiative to support First Nations jobs, employment, training and skills development, such as with the ASETS. As the five-year ASETS will come to an end in 2015, the TWG is meeting with federal officials to help demonstrate the need for a post-2015 strategy. In addition the TWG has requested information on criteria and details for the roll out of the new First Nations Jobs Fund; the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and possible links with ASETS holders; and recent work by the federal Reducing the Reporting Burden Working Group. The TWG was informed that HRSDC plans to have an electronic survey ready by this summer on the National Aboriginal Resource Allocation Model (NARAM) formula. The AFN will examine the feasibility of the survey, and advocate for appropriate questions and participation to include both leadership and technical experts. The TWG is also preparing a NARAM discussion paper to help inform the federal government of the background and potential policy issues to be considered for the NARAM.

As a result of parliamentary committee appearances and advocacy efforts, which included a national postcard campaign to the Prime Minister, the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA) unanimously passed a motion to study Aboriginal labour force training and ASETS Renewal during the upcoming fall session of Parliament.

First Nations e-Community

The AFN Chiefs Committee on Economic Development includes focus on First Nations connectivity and continues to advocate for increased access and support for First Nations Information Communications Technology (ICT). Resolutions 11/2006, 16/2008 and 53/2011 provide direction to advocate for appropriate program, services and investments in First Nations ICT.

This past spring, the AFN held an Ad Hoc ICT Working Group videoconference meeting during which discussions focused on obtaining technical advice and recommendations on issues such as: regional First Nations ICT priorities; updates on regional activities and infrastructure projects; and, input on the investments required to inform the First Nations e-Community strategy. The draft First Nations e-Community strategy is completed, however it is important to note that current First Nations sources of data to help support the strategy continue to be a challenge.

The AFN has continued to undertake work related to data and information gaps within the connectivity portfolio. The AFN has provided input on First Nations ICT related issues for consideration within the next phase of the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) Regional Health Survey. An AFN ICT and Business survey was also initiated during the 2012/2013 fiscal year, in order to obtain information on the economic impacts of access to broadband and ICT on the First Nations business community.

Over the past year, the AFN has undertaken communications activities and efforts to highlight the need for greater attention to First Nations connectivity. A First Nations e-Community update was provided during the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly Economic Partnerships side session held in December 2012; policy briefs have been developed on First Nations ICT and security and privacy considerations, and corporate relations; and, a First Nations Youth and ICT Web Event was held in March 2013. The AFN continues to monitor federal developments regarding the Digital Economy Strategy for Canada and to identify the unique requirements of First Nations and ICT.

The AFN has submitted a proposal to continue advocacy and policy development activities on the First Nations e-Community portfolio in 2013/2014. Key areas of work and focus being considered include: continued policy development and building on new research to demonstrate the economic benefits and business case of First Nations connectivity; the development of a First Nations e-Services platform concept to support First Nations Government administration; an informational guide to share information and examples of the steps forward and partnerships required for successful First Nations community ICT infrastructure builds; and, the potential to host a national First Nations ICT conference. A national conference would provide an excellent opportunity to showcase the many examples of First Nations innovation, business opportunities and expertise in the ICT sector.

Research Supporting First Nations Economic Policy

The AFN continues to conduct research and analysis on how to support First Nations trade and investment activity, including the re-introduction and establishment of trade opportunities. A research paper this past year considered the possibility for a trade advisory group to assist in leading the work for trade programs, services and incentives to support First Nation businesses interested in expanding to new markets.

Another report, “Public Sector Procurement in Canada: Possible Actions to Increase First Nations Opportunities and Benefits”, explored the opportunities beyond traditional procurement markets, and actions that can be taken to better position First Nation communities and businesses as players, partners and beneficiaries in the dynamic public procurement marketplace. A final report, “Improving Access to Bonding Instruments by First Nations Businesses”, examined possible solutions to workable and fair surety instruments for First Nations.

In 2012/13, the AFN also compiled in a report titled, “Resource Revenue Sharing with First Nations” to outline the elements to begin developing workable models for resource sharing. In addition, an earlier paper discussing the prospect for a “National Energy Strategy, First Nation Rights and Corporate Responsibility: Understanding the links and acting to create shared success” was prepared to help bring together the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and current development considerations. These papers will be offered to help inform future discussions, joint task forces, and/or working groups examining resource revenue issues.

Additionally, the MacDonald-Laurier Institute has announced, in May 2013, a three-year initiative to explore resource revenue development issues as they relate to Aboriginal communities. The AFN has been approached to consider a memorandum of understanding with the MacDonald-Laurier Institute. The AFN will, at minimum, closely monitor the work of the MacDonald-Laurier Institute.

The key findings and principles contained in previous and ongoing AFN research into Indigenous Peoples trade and investment has supported the strengthening of collaborative efforts with Indigenous Peoples in North America. There continues to be considerable momentum in joint efforts with the National Congress of American Indians. The two-year work plan with the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development (NCAIED) has come to a close however continued work is a possibility. The AFN has been consistent in its elaboration of an interest to enhance Indigenous peoples’ trade networks in North America. In 2012/13, the AFN has explored with the NCAI the possibility to work more closely on trade and investment advocacy.

First Nation Ad-hoc Advisory Working Group on Taxation

The AFN continues to draft and obtain input for a strategic plan and legal strategy to support First Nations and protect First Nation tax immunity and tax rights, building on the positive outcomes in the *Bastien* and *Dubé* decisions.

The April, 2013 decision by the Canada Revenue Agency to exempt tax on income earned from Eskasoni First Nation commercial fishermen is seen as an added tax immunity victory that should be replicated across the country. Updates were provided during the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA) and Annual General Assembly (AGA) Economic Strategy Sessions (December 2011; July 2010; December 2010).

The AFN is also exploring the potential for a national conference on taxation, revenue options, and trade which would include issues related to immunity, current status of case law, governance systems, fiscal matters, and revenue options. The AFN has begun to canvass potential interest among select federal departments to participate/fund this event.

A meeting of the ad-hoc working group on First Nations and Taxation was last held on September 14-15, 2011 in Ottawa. Following this, a legal update was provided during the Economic Strategy Session at the December 2011 SCA. This work builds from past resolutions and sessions held at the 2010 AGA and SCA. The ad-hoc working group discussed the Supreme Court of Canada's positive rulings made on July, 22, 2011 in regard to the *Bastien* and *Dubé* on-reserve investment income exemption cases; employment income taxation and other taxation issues impacting First Nations; fiscal/revenue matters; and further work towards a national strategy on First Nations and taxation.

Poverty Action Research Project (PAR Project)

The AFN, through the Chiefs Committee on Economic Development, has established a Make Poverty History Expert Advisory Committee. As part of its activity, the committee has been successful in obtaining a five-year research grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health (IAPH).

The PAR Project identified five volunteer First Nation communities in different parts of Canada who are interested in working with the Research Team. This involves designing and implementing a strategic plan to create a sustainable economic base, reduce poverty, and improve the health and well-being of community members. The communities participating in the PAR Project have completed activity that includes establishing local advisory committees, put in place key researchers, begun to gather base level data and information, and have drafted community profiles. The second national meeting bringing together all participating communities and researchers was held June 9-11, 2013 in Montreal.

Sustainability

Organizational sustainability is an area of focus and coordination within the AFN. A sustainability working group has been established that includes staff from various sectors. The primary focus of the working group is to develop own source revenue strategies and ideas; conduct research to determine feasibility of potential revenue generation projects; and, to implement revenue generation initiatives. Examples of initiatives in development include: a hotel rebate program for AFN meetings; an e-Governance and e-Services project; new contracting sources, and, research into obtaining ISO certification.

The AFN also provides coordination support to the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) Trust. Over the next few months, work toward the development of a strategy and plan will begin, in relation to which there may be an opportunity to link parts of the organizational sustainability initiatives, pending further planning, with revenue generation objectives.



NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Work with the First Nation TWG on Human Resources Development, and HRSDC, to discuss planning toward the next 5-year strategic initiative to support First Nations and labour force participation; research initiatives; awareness building; and the First Nation involvement in the First Nations Job Fund.
- Meet regularly with AANDC towards the establishment and coordination of a resource revenue discussion and designated working group.
- Continue to work towards the establishment of a VRC, as well as follow-up with those parties who have expressed an interest in becoming more involved in the development of this initiative/tool.
- Coordinate a National First Nations ICT conference for 2013-2014, pending viability and confirmation of funding, and/or participate in the First Nations National Youth Summit.
- Continued focus on addressing data and information management gaps within the economic partnerships policy portfolio.
- Continued focus on sectoral collaboration with economic partnerships, health, education, housing and infrastructure, water, and emergency issues management portfolios areas.
- Distribution and promotion of the First Nations e-Community strategy.
- Examination of the feasibility to hold a national summit on First Nations Revenue Options, Trade and Taxation.
- Research and data gathering on revenue streams, agreements, foreign investment agreements, foreign direct investment, and global trade support requirements.
- Follow-up to trade missions and trade opportunity.
- Continued work with the National Congress of American Indians on trade, connectivity and taxation.
- Continued support for the PAR Project and report to the CCED on the development of this initiative.
- Continue to assist wherever possible AFN organizational sustainability and NIB trust planning.

JUSTICE

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is mandated through resolutions to pursue changes within the criminal justice system to respond to the needs of First Nation peoples, and advocate for the return of control to First Nation communities, so that they may determine their own destinies.

First Nations have Inherent and Treaty rights to govern themselves according to their own laws, enforcement and dispute resolution processes. However, these rights have been interfered with through the imposition of non-Indigenous governance and legal systems. As a result, First Nation citizens face many challenges related to the Canadian justice institutions.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Community Safety and Ending Violence

The AFN continues our efforts to support the calls for attention to the urgent issue of murdered and missing Indigenous women throughout Canada and the need for a national action plan to end violence against Indigenous women and girls. At the 2012 Annual General Assembly (AGA), the AFN held a special dialogue session on *Demanding Justice and Fulfilling Rights: A Strategy to End Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls*. This strategy directs concrete and immediate actions to work against violence and victimization.

Resolution 01/2012 (Murdered and Missing Women) directs continued advocacy and attention to this matter and furthers the call for a National Public Commission of Inquiry to examine the factors around missing and murdered Indigenous women and violence against Indigenous girls and women.

Chiefs and delegates at the AGA signed a banner and made a person pledge to “live violence free and to personally work to achieve safety and security for all Indigenous peoples – women and men, girls and boys”. This pledge is also available online and AFN has actively encouraged all Indigenous citizens and Canadians to sign-on as part of the “i pledge. end violence.” campaign to mark the National Day of Remembrance for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (October 4, 2012) and the first National Day of Action on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (October 18, 2012). National Chief Atleo and AFN Executive attended the Sisters in Spirit rally and candlelight vigil on Parliament Hill on October 4 in memory of murdered and missing Indigenous women. National Chief Atleo also attended a regional memorial/rally in Edmonton, Alberta on October 6, 2012. On October 18, 2012, the AFN and the Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC) held a webcast on actions to end violence. An archive of this webcast can be found on www.afn.ca.

In further response to Resolution 01/2012, the AFN worked with NWAC to co-host a National Forum on Community Safety and Ending Violence that took place in Edmonton on April 9-10, 2013. Over 380 participants attended the Forum, including leaders, community-based justice workers, government officials and families of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls.

The intent of the Forum was to seek input into the development of National Action Plan to end violence containing concrete and tangible actions for all levels of government and building on successful and innovative initiatives. Key areas of discussion included addressing structural violence and systemic racism; building strong and healthy communities; cultural connections and resiliency; strengthening partnership and awareness; intergovernmental relationships, coordination and accountability. In addition, the Forum featured a number of speakers and participants engaged directly in action planning, providing written recommendations in small groups and on their own.

Key recommendations included unity among Indigenous peoples to create change; increased attention to prevention and personal responsibility for creating safe homes and communities; the need for men to be engaged and actively involved in preventing violence; greater awareness and accountability amongst all of society; and for the active involvement and empowerment of the families of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls in developing solutions to prevent future tragedies. A National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls is being developed incorporating input from the Forum along with direction from Chiefs and previous recommendations. The Plan will be presented at the 2013 AGA.

In December of 2011, the AFN and RCMP signed a work plan on missing and murdered Aboriginal persons. The objective of this work plan was to establish trusting and reciprocal relationships among the parties with the goal of jointly addressing the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal persons. This includes resolution of historical cases and related issues, prevention of new incidences, and communication with victims, families and the community at the earliest possible opportunity.

The work plan includes “missing persons” due to information from an RCMP briefing that disclosed that there are just as many men as women – and even more in some regions – that are missing or murdered.

Developments towards a National Inquiry

There is growing momentum and increased commentary on the need for a National Public Inquiry into violence against Indigenous women and girls, including those that have been murdered or are missing.

On February 14, 2013, Parliament voted to create a Special Committee on Violence Against Indigenous Women (IWFA) that will conduct an investigation into the high incidences of violence, identify root causes and provide recommendations for solutions. The committee has one year to complete its study and table a report. While this falls short of a National Inquiry it can further increase awareness and broader public support for the call.

At the April 17, 2013 meeting of the Council of the Federation Aboriginal Affairs Working Group comprised of Provincial and Territorial (PT) Ministers of Aboriginal Affairs and Leaders of National Aboriginal Organizations, PT Ministers in attendance strongly supported the call for a National Public Commission of Inquiry. Other civil society organizations continue to lend their voices to this call.

Aboriginal Justice Strategy

The Aboriginal Justice Strategy (AJS) funds critical community-based and community-directed programming which supports sentencing, restorative justice initiatives, victim services and responsible post-sentence reintegration. These programs work to ensure the safety and security of First Nation citizens and promote the positive reintegration of offenders.

Funding for the AJS is approved on a five-year basis and had expired as of March 31, 2012. There have been two one-year renewals since that time and this funding uncertainty is having significant impacts on First Nation communities. The AFN will continue advocacy for ongoing and predictable support.

First Nations Policing

First Nation police services play an important public safety role in our communities. Unfortunately First Nation police services are not afforded the same respect or recognition as mainstream police services as they are underfunded on a year to year basis and are designated as enhancement to either provincial police services or the RCMP as opposed to essential police services.

Despite the evolution of First Nation police services over the years, the First Nations Policing Policy (FNPP) and program has not been updated to address chronic underfunding or the legal designation of our police services. A more sustained effort is required by federal and provincial governments including the RCMP to continue building working relationships nationally and regionally to address the current gaps in First Nation policing i.e. chronic under funding and legal designation, which in turn would lead to safer and secure communities and families.

The AFN has engaged in dialogue with Public Safety Canada and the RCMP to advocate for improvements in policing to First Nation communities, including strengthened support for stand-alone police services. Over the next year the AFN will be undertaking specific activities to determine additional policing requirements and possible gaps in service due to federal legislative changes.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue advocacy for a National Public Commission of Inquiry on violence against Indigenous women and girls, including an investigation of root causes and preventative factors.
- Finalize a National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls and move forward on its implementation.
- Advocate for ongoing and predictable funding for community-based justice programs, including those funded by the Aboriginal Justice Strategy.
- Continue advocacy to declare First Nations Policing Services as essential services, with sustainable and predictable funding.
- In conjunction with the First Nations Chiefs of Police Association and regional organizations, identify all current levels of policing services and gaps in service, including the increased demand due to the Government of Canada's "Tough on Crime" framework.

- Communication/media outreach to highlight the current state of affairs as it relates to First Nation policing services nationally and to offer solutions from the First Nation perspective.
- Facilitate meetings with First Nation leadership and Minister of Public Safety to examine new funding models and approaches to the First Nations Policing Program – including committed funding over a 10 to 20 year timeframe.
- Evaluation of the AFN – RCMP work plan on missing and murdered Aboriginal persons and recommendations on how to move forward on this work.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

First Nations Water and Wastewater Action Plan (FNWWAP) evaluation

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) has started an evaluation of the performance and relevance of the First Nation Water and Wastewater Action Plan (FNWWAP). The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a member of the working group along with the AANDC Community Infrastructure Branch. Health Canada is doing a parallel evaluation. The AFN will ensure that adequate and appropriate case studies, informant interviews and inclusion of regional First Nation technicians in a technical working group. Case study visits are currently being conducted by the Institute on Governance. The FNWWAP and its predecessor, the First Nations Water Management Strategy (FNWMS), has been the main funding delivery program associated with the federal provision for water and water projects since 2003. This evaluation will look at the performance of the program since 2008 when the FNWMS was replaced by the FNWWAP.

Community Infrastructure Partnership Program (CIPP)

Work will continue with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) on the AANDC-funded Community Infrastructure Partnership Program (CIPP) project that has developed a toolkit to foster relationships between First Nations and adjacent municipalities across Canada, encouraging mutually beneficial service agreements – particularly those pertaining to water and wastewater infrastructure. The FCM CIPP staff attended the AFN Emergency Management Forum in October 2012 to provide further information on the CIPP Toolkit and is conducting ongoing workshops with interested First Nations and municipalities. The AFN is a member of the Steering Committee. A National Service Agreement Database is being developed that will contain a library of existing agreements between municipalities and First Nations.

Fire Inspection Service

On July 28, 2012, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) advised AANDC that as of March 31, 2014, it will discontinue service related to fire safety inspections and fire engineering services provided to First Nations.

AANDC will inherit the responsibility for the Fire Inspection/Engineering Services. The AFN met with HRSDC and AANDC to discuss continuation of the service. AANDC and the AFN will facilitate development of options for a continuity plan including hiring dedicated AANDC inspections and/or engineers; using Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) inspectors and/or engineers; retaining external/private inspectors and/or engineers through standing offer; devolving engineering and/or inspection service delivery to Tribal Councils and/or technical services organizations; working with provinces and municipalities to have them deliver engineering and/or inspection services; or providing responsibility to the First Nation for acquiring fire engineering and/or fire safety inspection services. Regional First Nation organizations are considering their options.

These efforts are being undertaken to ensure there is no denial of service during the transition and that there is a seamless transfer from HRSDC to AANDC.

Infrastructure Funding

Budget 2013 identified \$155 million over 10 years for First Nations infrastructure as part of the new Building Canada Fund, in addition to the First Nations share of the Gas Tax Fund (GTF). The previous First Nations Infrastructure Fund (FNIF) was heavily oversubscribed indicating a huge need for basic community infrastructure funding.

In addition, Budget 2013 noted approximately \$7 billion over 10 years under existing programming to build, operate and maintain infrastructure on reserve. This represents existing funding under the annual Capital Facilities Maintenance Program (CFMP) budget. The Audit of the Capital Facilities and Maintenance Program released in January 2009 reported that the annual budget is approximately \$1 billion per year. However, according to AANDC First Nation Infrastructure Investment Program (FNIIIP) reports, funding has eroded to approximately \$770 million annually in recent years. This announcement confirms that FNIIIP funding will continue to decrease over the next 10 years.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to work with AANDC Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch on the Evaluation of the First Nation Water and Wastewater Action Plan to provide advice that will reflect the interests and concerns of First Nation regarding this program. Review and provide comments on draft evaluation report if provided. Provide analysis of evaluation recommendation and monitor Management response to the recommendations.
- Continue to sit on CIPP Steering Committee to provide advice on how to best utilize the Service Agreement toolkit so that First Nations will benefit from the agreements.
- Facilitate dialogue between regional First Nation organizations and AANDC to identify the option they want to pursue to ensure there is a continuation of fire safety inspections - a critical service that directly impacts the life safety issues at the community level.
- Continue to advocate for increased infrastructure funding, facilitate opportunities for investigation alternative financing options, continue to make links from innovative technology processes and systems to provide cost effective infrastructure management, and provide opportunities for information sharing and interactions through conferences, tradeshow, seminars, etc.

HOUSING

Federal programs are not meeting housing need nor are they decreasing the current backlog of housing in First Nation communities. Between 2010 and 2031, it is estimated that there will be a backlog of 130,000 units, 44% of the existing units requiring major repairs and 18% requiring replacement. Mold is prevalent in many homes. The federal government has identified a strategy to examine the presence, but not to remediate the mold. Flooding has plagued some First Nations. The federal government has displaced First Nation citizens due to flooding, some for over two years, but has not made any solid effort to assist communities in repairing their homes.

Several Assembly of First Nations (AFN) resolutions address the critical need for safe, secure and adequate housing for First Nations. The resolutions direct the AFN to call on the federal government to respect the jurisdictional authority of First Nations and their duly mandated organizations in exercising roles and responsibilities for housing.

Resolutions also call on government to respect its fiduciary responsibility to provide for housing based on the Treaty Right to Shelter. The government has taken the position that housing is nothing more than a social obligation and not a fiduciary responsibility based upon Treaty rights. A number of resolutions have framed the current AFN approach to housing which calls for more direct engagement of First Nations in a new National Strategy for First Nations Housing that is rights based.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Resolution 81/2008 called for a direct and inclusive role for First Nations in the evaluation of the 1996 On-Reserve Housing Policy. The evaluation process included a critical look at the manner in which the policies, programs and activities of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (now Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada - AANDC) and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) were devised; the degree of First Nations consultation and influence in the developmental process; regional variations of interpretation of policy intent and decision-making; and that the evaluation process be seen as the starting point of meaningful participation in all future activities in the renovation of the 1996 Policy.

It was acknowledged that the housing programs, activities and initiatives were developed outside of the scope of First Nation needs and priorities and had no meaningful First Nations input.

In the absence of a cohesive strategy on the part of the Government of Canada, it is incumbent on First Nations to forge a direction for the future of First Nations Housing both on and off reserve.

A National Strategy for First Nations Housing

Resolution 83/2011, Housing as a National Priority, continues previous resolutions that called for the recognition of First Nation Governments to manage and control housing and infrastructure programs from a grassroots, or provincial/territorial organization structure.

The AFN has developed a draft strategy that provides a framework for a new administrative management and delivery structure for First Nations housing portfolios, to be discussed at the 2013 Annual General Assembly. This strategy adheres to a rights-based approach to adequate housing for First Nations citizens in and away from the community. These rights are guaranteed through treaties, recognition of pre-existing and inherent rights, international covenants and declarations. The strategy will set out a series of general principles and objectives as well as specific commitments to provide direction and a transparent mechanism for measuring success. This is to be achieved with the engagement and consultation with First Nations and their duly mandated organizations at the local, territorial and regional levels. It will be guided by the AFN Chiefs Committee on Housing & Infrastructure and its Technical Working Group.

A comprehensive National Strategy includes all aspects of housing, from social housing and the care and control of band-owned housing assets to individual and private home ownership and provides particular focus on innovation in housing, high standards of construction, use of local labour and further examination of the ability to modify a real estate market in the community.

Elements of the draft strategy include:

- Facilitating the development of a Virtual Centre of Excellence, hosted on the AFN website, that will act as the initial 'hub' to both established and emerging housing entities that will function at the local, territorial and regional levels. It will share existing documents that can assist Housing Managers in effectively delivering housing programs in their communities.
- Creating a mechanism of advice and support for the development of housing entities or 'Housing Authorities'.
- Negotiating a new funding mechanism dedicated to the First Nation Institutional Network and work to see the transition of funding for current Government of Canada housing programs, activities and initiatives to this First Nation Institutional Network for Housing.
- Developing and aligning appropriate programs, activities and initiatives to meet the housing needs and priorities of First Nations.
- Supporting the development of regulatory environments necessary for any First Nation to fully exercise its authority in housing.
- Identifying proven options for the means of Operational Control of Housing in First Nations and assisting First Nations in achieving the chosen option.
- Assisting in building First Nation capacities to exercise housing responsibilities successfully and sustainably. The capacities required for success would include social, human, financial and technical elements.

The strategy supports a multilateral partnership approach to strengthening relationships and promotes the sharing of information and best practices. Partnerships could include industry, private sector, professional associations, unions, public foundations, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations.

AFN - Holmes Group - Atikameksheng Anishnawbek Pilot Project

The project is well underway with all objectives completed or near completion. While the project has taken longer than anticipated, the work is being adopted by the entire community.

The AFN will be renewing its Statement of Partnership with the Holmes Group, as well as the Agreement in Principle between the AFN, the Holmes Group and Atikameksheng Anishnawbek First Nation.

Atikameksheng Anishnawbek has gone through a Master Architectural Planning Review designed to capture all of the features of the community. This was intended to act as a starting point for the project and a foundation for Comprehensive Community Planning with the assistance of Dalhousie University and the project team.

A Conditional Assessment of the community's existing housing stock (58 units) was undertaken to determine deficiencies related to health, safety, fire protection, structural stability and accessibility. A Specification List is being developed to determine the optimum methods and materials for the renovations of these units. This Specification will be based on cost efficiency, energy efficiency, increased durability and a healthier indoor environment for its occupants.

Architectural drawings for seven new housing units are complete which were specifically designed with the climactic zone, soil and environmental aspects in mind for Atikameksheng Anishnawbek First Nation. These designs have been used in a bidding process for contracts to build this summer.

The development of the First Nation Green Housing Standards – now referred to as the First Nations Sustainable Development Standards (FNSDS) – has begun. It is comprised of a number of key elements including:

- Assessing the current housing situation;
- Developing effective strategies for housing;
- Comprehensive community planning for housing;
- Creating a regulatory environment (codes-standards-rules-regulations-land use/zoning-policies-bylaws-permits-compliance and enforcement);
- Models of operational control for housing (governance-funding-finance-management-administration-operations and portfolio maintenance);
- Energy efficiency measures;
- Renewable and alternative energy options;
- Water and Wastewater considerations;
- Preferred construction methods and materials;
- Environmental and traditional considerations;
- Health-based specifications; and,
- Occupant awareness and training needs.

Inspection Protocols are being developed for both the Conditional Assessment of Existing Housing and for the Code Compliance of New Housing. New features for these protocols include the value optimization of methods and materials, specifications with a particular focus on healthy materials and healthier indoor air quality, a view of quality assurance to ensure proper construction techniques and skills proficiency are achieved, and finally a commissioning exercise prior to occupancy to ensure the house is operating efficiently and as designed.



Work on the Virtual Centre of Excellence has progressed with the development of Model Housing Policy Guidelines, which are available on the AFN website at <http://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/housing/housing-policy-guide.pdf>. A “Housing Authority Models” document has been written to guide the operational controls for First Nation housing. The Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation has agreed to allow an updated Ontario First Nation Illustrated Housing Code to be used in the Housing Centre of Excellence.

National Housing Liaison Committee

Revitalization of the National Housing Liaison Committee commenced in late 2012, with representation from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Health Canada and the AFN. From time to time, subject matter experts will be brought in to assist in clarification or technical knowledge.

The objectives of the National Housing Liaison Committee are to support First Nations and First Nation organizations in their housing roles and responsibilities; identify housing issues and to advise on broad policies and processes to enhance housing outcomes on-reserve including settlement lands and self-governing First Nation territories; and to provide a regular forum for exchanging information on First Nations housing matters, including recommendations to the authorities related to programs, policies and practices that will contribute to enhanced housing outcomes on First Nations.

The AFN will press for implementation of recommendations from the 1996 On-Reserve Housing Policy evaluation.

First Nations Indoor Air Quality Committee

The AFN has been active on the First Nation Indoor Air Quality Committee, which has developed an application for First Nations to conduct a self-assessment tool for mold in housing. The electronic Community Self-Assessment Tool (e-CSAT) is undergoing a pilot stage review. It is hoped that the application will be finalized and available for use in the coming months. The AFN is in discussions with the First Nations Information Governance Centre to house the data and generate ongoing reports at national and regional levels. This tool will help communities better understand the extent and causes of mold problems in individual houses and throughout the community, identify which houses need attention first, and organize an effective remediation strategy.

Habitat for Humanity

The AFN and Habitat for Humanity entered into a Statement of Partnership in December 2011. Since that time a working group has been established to do exploratory work on Habitat for Humanity’s Aboriginal Housing Program, which has been successfully implemented in self-governing First Nations and Métis Settlements; however, it requires flexibilities for implementation on-reserve. If successful, the program could provide an alternative housing option to First Nation communities.

Shelter Allowance

The AFN is working to seek resolution to the housing challenges created by AANDC's non-payment of the shelter allowance under the income assistance program to clients residing in expired social housing agreement units or band-owned units that don't have a universal rental regime in place.

Currently, First Nations working with CMHC under the Non-Profit Housing Program (Section 95) are only eligible to receive the shelter allowance until mortgages are paid in full. If however, the First Nation implements a universal rental regime in the community, then those units are eligible to collect the shelter allowance. Similarly, band-owned or self-funded units are eligible as well to collect the shelter allowance from income assistance clients. This would allow the First Nation to collect rent from those individuals and, in turn, utilize it for maintenance, repair and potentially remediation of mold.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue research, dialogue and improvements on the National First Nations Housing Strategy for adoption at the 2013 Annual General Assembly and ongoing implementation.
- Continue development of the Virtual Centre of Excellence to support First Nation capacity to fully deliver all aspects of housing within their territories.
- Create greater awareness and understanding of First Nations' critical housing needs and encourage investments and adequate resources.
- Continue to support and model promising practices from the AFN-Holmes Group-Atikameksheng Anishnawbek Pilot Project.



WATER AND WASTEWATER

First Nations' rights to use and manage our precious water resources derive from the Creator and sacred responsibility has been given to us to protect it. The management of water resources and the protection of source water is a right that First Nations have not relinquished through Treaties. It is a crucial and paramount requirement that First Nations be consulted and accommodated in any policy, legal and other decisions related to this precious resource. As such, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) advocates and supports First Nations' positions where the control and access to adequate water resources threatens their rights and jurisdiction.

In the modern context this right is recognized in the Canadian *Constitution Act, 1982* and affirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Aboriginal Peoples.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Bill S-8, Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act

This Bill received Royal Assent on June 18, 2013 despite the strong objections of First Nations.

The AFN advocated that this Bill needed to clearly recognize and respect First Nation Inherent and Treaty rights and that critical resources and infrastructure are needed in First Nation communities to bring First Nation facilities to an acceptable standard that will provide safe drinking to all First Nation communities and citizens comparable to that enjoyed by the rest of Canada.

The AFN also recommended that accommodation be provided in the legislation to recognize those First Nations or their duly created and mandated institutions that have the capacity and capability to develop, administer and enforce their own water laws. Finally, as directed in Resolution 20-2012 the AFN advocated for a clear non-derogation clause to be including in this legislation, replacing the conditional derogation clause that it currently contains.

While the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development assured parliamentarians that the regulations to implement this Bill would be phased in, to ensure that First Nations have necessary operating and infrastructure capacity, there is no reference in the Bill itself, or in official AANDC materials. However, the Bill does commit to working with First Nations to develop necessary regulations.

The AFN will work with First Nations and regional organizations to ensure that there is full involvement of First Nations in the development of regulations and that their rights and jurisdiction in this matter are clearly recognized and protected. The AFN will continue to advocate that adequate resources are made available to ensure that First Nations have access to clean drinking water.

National First Nation Water Strategy

A draft National First Nation Water Strategy was presented at the 2012 AFN Annual General Assembly. Resolution 45/2012 directs the AFN to actively facilitate discussion and seek input from First Nations, regional technical working groups and other organizations to further refine the development of a comprehensive National First Nations Water Strategy, to be overseen by the Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure.

Work to refine the strategy has been ongoing and it will be presented during the 2013 AGA for further discussion and dialogue. In advance of the research needed to support the strategy, a pilot project has been initiated to identify activity in every watershed in Canada.

National Engineering Assessment

On July 2011, AANDC released the results of the National Assessment of First Nations Water and Wastewater Systems. The national roll up report revealed that 39% of the drinking water systems in First Nation communities are considered “high risk” and 34% are “moderate risk”, which means 73% of the systems pose risk to First Nation citizens. The report identified a need of \$4.7 billion over the next 10 years to address these factors.

The AFN welcomed the release of this long awaited report and immediately called for the federal government to work urgently with First Nations on a concrete action plan that will deliver safe drinking water and improved wastewater systems to First Nation citizens.

Resolution 74/2011 calls on the Government of Canada to develop a five-year capital plan and provide immediate and sustainable funding to address the high and medium risk water and wastewater systems. The AFN has called for a business plan to set out how the work identified in the assessment will be undertaken, but to date this has not been provided.

Budget 2012 provided for another \$330.8 million over two years for an extension to the First Nations Water and Wastewater Action Plan.

Environment Canada (EC) Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations

Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations

The *Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations* were published on July 18, 2012 and are now in force. The Regulations apply to any wastewater system, including those on First Nations lands, that deposits pollutants specified in the Regulations into water frequented by fish (or a place referred to in subsection 36(3) of the Fisheries Act), as well as those designed to collect (or actually collect) an average daily wastewater volume of 100 m³ (100,000 litres) or more during any calendar year.

The Regulations include effluent quality standards achievable through secondary treatment or equivalent, compliance timelines, and rules on monitoring and reporting.

If a wastewater system is not designed to achieve a secondary level of treatment, the wastewater system owner/operator should apply to request a transitional authorization (TA). A TA is required to allow continued operation while you upgrade your wastewater system to achieve secondary wastewater treatment and sets the timeline for upgrade. If the owner/operator of a wastewater system that is not at a secondary level of treatment chooses not to apply for a TA, the deposit of effluent from the wastewater system would not be in compliance with the law.

The complete *Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations* can be found at:
<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2012-139/>.

The timeline for the *Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations Reporting* can be found using the search function on the Environment Canada website at: <http://www.ec.gc.ca>.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- Continue advocacy to ensure the principle of free, prior and informed consent is adhered to by the Government of Canada in the implementation of legislation and associated regulations concerning drinking water in First Nation communities.
- Support and assist regional First Nation organizations towards establishing their framework for the management of their water resources, wastewater, watersheds and source water protection.
- Continue to inform the Government of Canada that the infrastructure resource gap needs to be addressed prior to implementing a water and wastewater regulatory regime.
- Follow up on the results of the National Engineering Assessment to ensure that the government is accountable in addressing the capital infrastructure needs identified by the study and a business plan is provided that will address the demand in a timely manner.
- Continue to actively facilitate discussion and seek input from First Nations, regional technical working groups and other organizations to further develop a comprehensive National First Nations Water Strategy, to be overseen by the Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure.
- Concurrent with the development of a National Water Strategy, continue to develop a conceptual framework on a First Nations/Indigenous Water Commission.
- Continue to establish a web portal to share best practices for water, wastewater, source water protection and watershed management.

EMERGENCY ISSUES MANAGEMENT

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has taken on a more active role in emergency issues management activities affecting First Nations. This activity is supported through an agreement with the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) Emergency Issues Management Directorate.

Work in this area addresses the four pillars of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The work also includes continued development and implementation of emergency management frameworks through collaborative working relationships between First Nations, neighboring communities, federal/provincial/territorial governments, and other agencies.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management (SOREM)

The AFN is a member of First Nations-Inuit-Northerners Working Group (FNINWG), developed as part of the larger Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management (SOREM) group. The AFN has been contributing to the development of the *Statement of Principles Concerning Emergency Management for Aboriginal Communities* and the *Guidelines for Developing Agreements for Emergency Management Services of On-Reserve First Nations Communities in Canada*. The AFN has advocated for inclusion of First Nation concerns in the development of these documents which directly affect First Nation communities.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) Emergency Notifications

Through cooperation with the AANDC Emergency and Issues Management Directorate (EMD), the AFN has provided the regions with timely notifications on emergency issues which affect First Nations on a regional and national scope. To further facilitate this process, the AFN will engage regional technicians to refine the Emergency Issues Management process within First Nations.

Canadian Red Cross

The AFN is reviewing the current Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Red Cross with the intent of developing a “Cooperative Agreement” with focus on operational requirements.

First Nations Emergency Management Network

The First Nations Emergency Management Network (EMnet) is in its second year of development. The EMnet includes AFN regional representatives holding an emergency management file or position, AFN Health Technicians, First Nations Water Technical Advisory Group (FNTWAG), various federal organizations as contributing members, and the Canadian Red Cross.

The EMnet will serve to help First Nation communities develop emergency management and response through information sharing, best practices and possible capacity development and training. The Emergency Issues Management (EIM) section of the AFN website serves a depository for the collected information.

NEXT STEPS - MOVING FORWARD

- The AFN will continue to sit on the SOREM First Nations-Inuit-Northerners Working Group to represent the interests of First Nations in emergency management and will continue to participate in the development and completion of the *Statement of Principles Concerning Emergency Management for Aboriginal Communities* and the *Guidelines for Developing Agreements for Emergency Management Services of On-Reserve First Nations Communities in Canada*.
- The AFN will continue to develop its connections and networking to coordinate EIM efforts between the representative regions and organizations, federal and provincial organizations that have an emergency management component, and First Nations.
- The AFN will propose strategies for a process to build capacity in First Nations for a Community Emergency Response Coordinator, and research strategies for more ground-level community involvement.
- The AFN will continue to provide updates and reports on its activities and seek support from AANDC, and develop a more concerted connection with AANDC Emergency Issues Management Directorate on related issues and joint efforts.
- The AFN will continue to advocate for First Nations in the area of emergency management in its work with AANDC to ensure First Nations capacity in emergency response, monitor emergency events and improve conditions for First Nations experiencing dangerous situations.

Consolidated Financial Statements of the

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

March 31, 2013

DRAFT

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Executive Council of
National Indian Brotherhood

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of the National Indian Brotherhood (the "Corporation"), which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at March 31, 2013, and the consolidated statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Consolidated Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these consolidated financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.

.../2

Independent Auditor's Report (Continued)

Auditor's Responsibility (Continued)

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Corporation as at March 31, 2013, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Comparative Information

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 2 to the consolidated financial statements which describes that the Corporation adopted Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations on April 1, 2012, with a transition date of April 1, 2011. These standards were applied retrospectively by management to the comparative information in these financial statements, including the consolidated statements of financial position as at March 31, 2012 and April 1, 2011, and the consolidated statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year ended March 31, 2012 and related disclosures. We were not engaged to report on the comparative information, and as such, it is unaudited.

Chartered Professional Accountants, Chartered Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

July 16, 2013

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Consolidated Financial Statements
March 31, 2013

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NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Consolidated Statement of Operations

year ended March 31, 2013

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u> (Unaudited) (Note 2)
Revenue		
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) (Schedule 1)	\$ 11,238,656	\$ 11,062,453
Health Canada (Schedule 2)	3,414,270	8,341,579
Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC) (Schedule 2)	37,289	76,103
Natural Resources Canada (Schedule 2)	-	150,137
Justice Canada (Schedule 2)	10,120	-
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) (Schedule 2)	250,000	337,032
Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Schedule 2)	573,440	729,269
Environment Canada (Schedule 2)	277,000	282,000
Nuclear Waste Management Organization (Schedule 2)	142,962	180,049
Canadian Heritage (Schedule 2)	-	120,000
Public Safety (Schedule 2)	75,000	-
Commission for Environmental Cooperation (Schedule 2)	19,849	-
University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) (Schedule 2)	89,900	-
All other funding agencies (Schedule 2)	1,328,636	1,418,455
Trust Fund (Schedule 3)	1,500	3,331
	17,458,622	22,700,408
Expenses		
Advertising, promotion and publications	47,518	108,521
Amortization of capital assets	197,601	264,014
Insurance	19,554	31,316
Miscellaneous	4,818	37,897
Office expenses	879,051	1,039,622
Professional fees	1,644,315	3,103,750
Regional service delivery	1,341,495	1,495,043
Rent	2,230,227	1,361,707
Salaries and benefits	8,242,634	9,145,460
Travel and meetings	3,304,900	6,368,357
	17,912,113	22,955,687
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ (453,491)	\$ (255,279)

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position
as at March 31, 2013

	March 31, 2013	March 31, 2012 (Unaudited) (Note 2)	April 1, 2011 (Unaudited) (Note 2)
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 335,161
Asset held In Trust (Note 4)	20,987	20,987	20,987
Guaranteed Investment Certificate	-	9,530	9,268
Grants and contributions receivable (Note 5)	1,181,731	2,299,210	2,726,325
Other accounts receivable	763,314	607,491	1,157,552
GST recoverable	541,253	517,907	508,163
Inventory	15,768	9,718	16,173
Prepaid expenses	364,500	80,845	11,119
	2,887,553	3,545,688	4,784,748
PREPAID EXPENSES	672,074	-	-
CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 6)	279,356	474,673	728,396
	\$ 3,838,983	\$ 4,020,361	\$ 5,513,144
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Bank overdraft	\$ 613,392	\$ 67,182	\$ -
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	2,235,491	3,688,392	2,829,532
Government remittances payable	74,007	146,623	153,505
In Trust liability (Note 4)	20,987	20,987	20,987
Deferred contributions (Note 7)	346,425	48,393	2,059,937
Excess contributions (Note 8)	-	25,099	62,613
Current portion of long-term debt (Note 9)	461,512	21,512	107,607
	3,751,814	4,018,188	5,234,181
LONG-TERM DEBT (Note 9)	567,462	28,975	50,486
	4,319,276	4,047,163	5,284,667
CONTINGENCY (Note 10)			
NET ASSETS			
Invested in capital assets	250,381	424,186	570,303
Restricted funds (Note 11)	164,478	166,349	204,387
Unrestricted - general operations	(895,152)	(617,337)	(546,213)
	(480,293)	(26,802)	228,477
	\$ 3,838,983	\$ 4,020,361	\$ 5,513,144

ON BEHALF OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, National Chief

Roger Augustine, Regional Chief, Chairman Management Committee

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Consolidated Statement of Changes in Net Assets
year ended March 31, 2013

	Invested in <u>Capital Assets</u>	Restricted <u>Funds</u> (Note 11)	Unrestricted - <u>General Operations</u>	Total	
				2013	2012 (Unaudited) (Note 2)
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 424,186	\$ 166,349	\$ (617,337)	\$ (26,802)	\$ 228,477
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	-	(1,871)	(451,620)	(453,491)	(255,279)
Purchase of capital assets	2,284	-	(2,284)	-	-
Repayment of related debt	21,512	-	(21,512)	-	-
Amortization of capital assets	(197,601)	-	197,601	-	-
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	\$ 250,381	\$ 164,478	\$ (895,152)	\$ (480,293)	\$ (26,802)

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

year ended March 31, 2013

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u> (Unaudited) (Note 2)
NET INFLOW (OUTFLOW) OF CASH RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:		
OPERATING		
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	\$ (453,491)	\$ (255,279)
Items not affecting cash		
Amortization of capital assets	197,601	264,014
Increase in deferred contributions	298,032	(2,011,544)
Decrease in excess contributions	(25,099)	(37,514)
	<u>17,043</u>	<u>(2,040,323)</u>
Changes in non-cash operating working capital items (Note 12)	(1,548,986)	1,756,139
	<u>(1,531,943)</u>	<u>(284,184)</u>
INVESTING		
Disposal (purchase) of investments	9,530	(262)
Purchase of capital assets	(2,284)	(10,290)
	<u>7,246</u>	<u>(10,552)</u>
FINANCING		
Issuance of new long-term debt	1,000,000	-
Repayment of long-term debt	(21,512)	(107,607)
	<u>978,488</u>	<u>(107,607)</u>
NET CASH OUTFLOW	<u>(546,209)</u>	<u>(402,343)</u>
CASH (BANK OVERDRAFT), BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>(67,182)</u>	<u>335,161</u>
BANK OVERDRAFT, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ (613,391)</u>	<u>\$ (67,182)</u>

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

year ended March 31, 2013

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE ORGANIZATION

The National Indian Brotherhood (the "Corporation") was incorporated under Part II of the Canada Corporations Act on September 29, 1970 with the following objectives:

- to assist and to work towards solutions for problems facing the First Nations people;
- to operate as a national body to both represent the First Nations people and to disseminate information to them;
- to study, in conjunction with First Nations representatives across Canada, the problems confronting First Nations and to make representations to the government and other organizations on their behalf;
- to assist in retaining the First Nations culture and values; and
- to act as the national spokesperson for First Nations throughout Canada.

The Corporation acts as the secretariat to the Assembly of First Nations ("AFN").

The Corporation is a not-for-profit organization and, as such, is not subject to income taxes.

2. ADOPTION OF A NEW ACCOUNTING FRAMEWORK

On April 1, 2012, the Corporation adopted the new Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants ("CICA") accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (the "new standards") as set out in Part III of the CICA Handbook. The Corporation also applies the standards for private enterprises in Part II of the CICA Handbook to the extent that the Part II standards address topics not addressed in Part III. In accordance with Section 1501 of the CICA Handbook, Part III, First Time adoption by not-for-profit organizations, ("Section 1501"), the date of transition to the new standards is April 1, 2011 and the Corporation has presented an opening consolidated statement of financial position at the date of transition. This opening consolidated statement of financial position is the starting point for the Corporation's accounting under the new standards. In its opening consolidated statement of financial position, under the recommendations of Section 1501, the Corporation:

- a) recognized all assets and liabilities whose recognition is required by the new standards;
- b) did not recognize items as assets or liabilities if the new standards do not permit such recognition;

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

year ended March 31, 2013

2. ADOPTION OF A NEW ACCOUNTING FRAMEWORK (Continued)

- c) reclassified items that it recognized previously as one type of asset, liability or component of net assets, but are recognized as a different type of asset, liability or component of net assets under the new standards; and
- d) applied the new standards in measuring all recognized assets and liabilities.

In accordance with the requirements of Section 1501, the accounting policies set out in Note 3 have been consistently applied to all years. No exemptions were taken by the Corporation as at April 1, 2011. There were no adjustments required to the opening consolidated statement of financial position as at April 1, 2011, or to the March 31, 2012 consolidated financial statements on transition to the new standards.

3. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The consolidated financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and include the following significant accounting policies:

Basis of accounting and presentation

The Corporation follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions.

The financial statements include the accounts of the Corporation and those of the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund which is controlled by the Corporation. All significant inter-organizational transactions and balances have been eliminated on consolidation.

Financial instruments

The Corporation initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value. The Corporation subsequently measures all its financial assets and liabilities at amortized cost except for cash which is measured at fair value.

Capital assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost. Contributed capital assets are recorded at estimated fair value at the date of contribution.

Amortization is provided on the straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets as follows:

Computer equipment	3 years
Office equipment	3 years
Leasehold improvements	10 years

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

year ended March 31, 2013

3. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Revenue recognition

Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate program when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue of the appropriate program in the year in which the related expenses are incurred.

Contributions received towards the acquisition of capital assets are deferred and amortized to income on the same basis as the related depreciable capital assets are amortized.

Excess contributions

The excess of revenue over expenses of some programs may require repayment and is recorded as a liability. When approval to retain the funds has been received, the excess is then recorded as revenue.

Allocation of expenses

Allocation of administrative expenses between the programs or funding agencies is done in accordance with the stipulated basis of allocation and maximum amounts or percentages mentioned in each of the different contribution agreements entered into by the Corporation.

Use of estimates

The preparation of these consolidated financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the consolidated financial statements and the accompanying notes. In the opinion of management, these consolidated financial statements reflect, within reasonable limits of materiality, all adjustments necessary to present fairly the results for the years presented. Actual results could differ from these estimates. Assumptions are used in estimating the collectibility of grants and contributions receivable, other accounts receivable, GST recoverable, inventory reserves, useful life of capital assets, the amount of accrued liabilities and commitments.

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

year ended March 31, 2013

4. ASSET HELD IN TRUST

The Corporation is holding in trust an education fund totaling \$20,987 for Kelly Morrisseau's children. These funds were donated by individuals and organizations.

5. GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVABLE

Grants and contributions receivable are as follows:

	March 31, 2013	March 31, 2012	April 1, 2011
		(Unaudited) (Note 2)	(Unaudited) (Note 2)
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)	\$ 321,412	\$ 821,412	\$ 1,381,014
Canadian Heritage	-	12,000	-
Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC)	100,549	-	-
Dalhousie University	21,659	-	-
Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada	-	131,924	-
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)	25,000	171,955	388,418
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	525,941	668,676	665,711
Environment Canada	164,550	208,475	119,626
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	-	79,768	106,813
Justice Canada	10,120	-	59,743
Natural Resources Canada	-	100,000	-
Correctional Service Canada	-	40,000	-
Public Safety	7,500	60,000	-
Province of Ontario	5,000	5,000	5,000
	\$ 1,181,731	\$ 2,299,210	\$ 2,726,325

6. CAPITAL ASSETS

	March 31 2013		March 31 2012		April 1 2011
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
				(Unaudited) (Note 2)	(Unaudited) (Note 2)
Computer equipment	\$ 1,848,656	\$ 1,831,981	\$ 16,675	\$ 43,702	\$ 85,711
Office equipment	646,605	634,068	12,537	35,703	106,394
Leasehold improvements	1,451,240	1,201,096	250,144	395,268	536,291
	\$ 3,946,501	\$ 3,667,145	\$ 279,356	\$ 474,673	\$ 728,396

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
year ended March 31, 2013

7. DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS

Changes in the deferred contributions balance are as follows:

	<u>March 31, 2013</u>	March 31, 2012 (Unaudited) (Note 2)	April 1, 2011 (Unaudited) (Note 2)
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 48,393	\$ 2,059,937	\$ 1,235,901
Contributions received during the year	15,739,511	18,927,222	19,853,331
Contributions recognized as revenue during the year	(15,516,882)	(20,959,372)	(19,029,295)
Balance, end of year	271,022	27,787	2,059,937
Other deferred revenue	96,009	20,606	-
Other revenue recognized	(20,606)	-	-
	<u>\$ 346,425</u>	<u>\$ 48,393</u>	<u>\$ 2,059,937</u>

The balance, end of year is comprised of the following:

	<u>March 31, 2013</u>	March 31, 2012 (Unaudited) (Note 2)	April 1, 2011 (Unaudited) (Note 2)
Health Canada	\$ 55,690	\$ -	\$ 2,055,333
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	90,733	27,787	-
Annual General Assembly	-	20,365	-
Canadian Partnership Against Cancer	163,261	-	4,604
Commission for Environmental Corporation	18,026	-	-
Dalhousie University	13,439	-	-
Other	5,276	241	-
	<u>\$ 346,425</u>	<u>\$ 48,393</u>	<u>\$ 2,059,937</u>

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
year ended March 31, 2013

8. EXCESS CONTRIBUTIONS

Excess contributions are as follows:

	<u>March 31, 2013</u>	<u>March 31, 2012</u> (Unaudited) (Note 2)	<u>April 1, 2011</u> (Unaudited) (Note 2)
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,371
Health Canada	-	4,084	40,227
Environment Canada	-	19,521	19,521
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	-	1,494	1,494
	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 25,099</u>	<u>\$ 62,613</u>

The Corporation has recognized revenue from these excess contributions in the fiscal year.

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
year ended March 31, 2013

9. LONG-TERM DEBT

	<u>March 31, 2013</u>	<u>March 31, 2012</u> (Unaudited) (Note 2)	<u>April 1, 2011</u> (Unaudited) (Note 2)
Leasehold improvements payable, maturing in 2012, unsecured and non-interest-bearing, payable by monthly installments of \$9,511	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 86,095
Term installment loan, maturing January 2020, payable by 5 consecutive monthly payments of \$80,000 followed by 75 consecutive monthly installments of \$8,000 for capital bearing interest at prime plus 1%	1,000,000	\$ -	\$ -
Capital lease obligation, maturing in 2015, bearing interest at 3%, payable by monthly installments of \$1,793, including interest	<u>28,974</u>	50,487	71,998
	1,028,974	50,487	158,093
Current portion	<u>(461,512)</u>	(21,512)	(107,607)
	<u>\$ 567,462</u>	\$ 28,975	\$ 50,487

Principal payments required in each of the next five years are as follows:

2014	\$ 461,512
2015	103,462
2016	96,000
2017	96,000
2018	96,000
2019 and thereafter	176,000

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

year ended March 31, 2013

10. CONTINGENCY

The Corporation receives funding from various government agencies based on specific program needs and budgets and allocates certain expenses to the various programs. In many cases, the funding agent has the right to review the accounting records to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of their programs. At this time, no estimate of the requirements, if any, to reimburse the agencies can be made. Management of the Corporation believes that their allocations of expenses are fair and appropriate in the circumstances. Adjustments to the consolidated financial statements as a result of these reviews, if any, will be recorded in the period in which they become known.

Credit facility

The Corporation has a banking agreement which establishes a demand credit facility for general business purposes up to a maximum of \$2,500,000, bearing interest at prime plus 1%. The loan is secured by a general security agreement representing a first charge over all of the Corporation's assets. The balance outstanding at year-end is \$NIL (March 31, 2012 - \$NIL; April 1, 2011 - \$NIL).

11. THE NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD TRUST FUND

The consolidated financial statements include the accounts of the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund which is controlled by the Corporation. A summary description of this controlled entity is provided below.

The Trust Fund was established as a registered charity under paragraph 149 (i)(f) of the Income Tax Act and is comprised of the Language and Literacy Fund, the Youth Healing Fund, the Research Sponsor Fund and the Heroes of Our Times Fund.

Restricted funds are comprised of the following and are to be used for the purposes described below:

- The Language and Literacy Fund was established to promote education of First Nations' citizens by way of scholarship awards and the promotion of research, seminars and conferences of an academic nature into First Nations' rights, histories and cultures among First Nations' peoples as well as the Canadian public.
- The Youth Healing Fund was established in 1996 to support efforts to improve the self-esteem and profile of First Nations' Youth in Canada by organizing events which may bring together First Nations' Youth with political leaders and elders for spiritual and leadership training and support in the Youth's representation of their Nations at conferences and gatherings in Canada and internationally.

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

year ended March 31, 2013

11. THE NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD TRUST FUND (Continued)

- The Research Sponsor Fund was established in 2001 with the purpose to participate in research into economic, social and scientific problems of Indian communities with a view to proposing solutions to these problems.
- The Heroes of Our Times Fund was established in 2001 with the purpose of providing scholarship awards. The awards are made available to applicants who are able to demonstrate a proven record of intellectual and academic ability, integrity of character, interest and respect for fellow human beings, ability to lead, and the initiative to use their talents to the fullest. The awards are named in memory of the following figures of native history: Jake Fire (Criminology), Tommy Pierce (Native Studies), Walter Dieter (Social Work), Omar Peters (Political Science), Robert Smallboy (Medicine), James Gosnell (Law). The awards are presented each year at the Annual General Assembly of First Nations.

The Corporation appoints the Executive Council of the Trust Fund and ensures that the Trust Fund operates in compliance with the Corporation's Charter.

12. CHANGES IN NON-CASH OPERATING WORKING CAPITAL ITEMS

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
		(Unaudited) (Note 2)
Grants and contributions receivable	\$ 1,117,479	\$ 427,115
Other accounts receivable	(155,823)	550,061
GST recoverable	(23,346)	(9,744)
Prepaid expenses	(955,729)	(69,726)
Inventory	(6,050)	6,455
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(1,452,901)	858,860
Government remittances payable	(72,616)	(6,882)
	<u>\$ (1,548,986)</u>	<u>\$ 1,756,139</u>

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
year ended March 31, 2013

13. COMMITMENTS

The Corporation is committed to future minimum lease payments under operating leases for office space and equipment for which minimum annual payments for each of the next five years are as follows:

2014	\$ 1,115,604
2015	875,671
2016	856,684
2017	845,497
2018	<u>809,572</u>
	<u>\$ 4,503,028</u>

14. EXECUTIVE SALARIES

By virtue of an Annual General Assembly Resolution (62/98), the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) receives a salary which is adjusted annually in connection with the Consumer Price Index. Similarly, by virtue of a Confederacy of Nations resolution and an Executive Committee resolution, each Regional Chief is allocated a Director's fee. Management and unelected officials are compensated within average industry remuneration levels for their positions.

15. RETIREMENT ASSISTANCE

The Corporation contributes to a defined contribution pension plan for its employees and Regional Chiefs. Contributions are up to 6% of an employee's salary. The employer's contributions for the year were \$403,296 (2012 - \$444,672).

16. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Fair value

The fair value of long-term debt is determined using the present value of future cash flows under current financing agreements, based on the Corporation's current estimated borrowing rate for loans with similar terms and conditions. The fair value of the long-term debt as at March 31, 2013 approximates its carrying value.

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

year ended March 31, 2013

17. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (Continued)

Credit risk

The risk arises from the potential that one party to a financial instrument will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the other party to incur a financial loss.

The Corporation's various receivables represent credit provided for the Corporation's programs. The credit is provided mainly to the federal government and accordingly presents minimal credit risk to the Corporation.

The maximum credit exposure of the Corporation is represented by the fair value of the investments and various amounts receivable as presented in the consolidated statement of financial position.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the adverse consequences of interest rate changes on the Corporation's cash flows, financial position, investment income and interest expenses. The Corporation's cash, investments, long-term debt and demand credit facility are exposed to interest rate changes. The long-term debt generally bears interest at fixed rates, except for the leasehold improvements payable, which matures in 2012. Consequently, the cash flow exposure is not significant. However, the fair value of loans having fixed rates of interest could fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The interest bearing demand credit facility has a limited exposure to interest rate risk due to its short-term maturity. The impact of adverse changes in rates is not considered material.

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD

Statement of Operations

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)

year ended March 31, 2013

	Basic Organizational Capacity	First Nations Policy Process Mandate for Change	Education Jurisdiction & Governance	Housing and Infrastructure & Technical Water Conference	Emergency Management Issues	Social Development	First Nations Virtual Institute on Mining & Energy
Revenue							
Contribution/Grant	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 850,000	\$ 470,000	\$ 131,310	\$ 400,000	\$ 50,000
Miscellaneous	4,925	75,210	-	5,738	-	-	-
Trade Show	-	18,238	-	-	-	-	-
Registration fees	-	515,620	-	-	-	-	-
	5,004,925	1,709,068	850,000	475,738	131,310	400,000	50,000
Expenses							
Advertising, promotion and publications	2,968	2,780	519	129	37	134	1
Allocation of administrative expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance	5,685	1,738	1,809	560	210	623	4
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office expenses	194,596	142,327	61,700	14,367	4,228	34,733	478
Professional fees	152,652	151,723	41,317	28,242	2,268	27,365	42,908
Regional service delivery	1,100,124	68,482	-	17,356	-	-	-
Rent	386,208	57,541	80,790	46,051	15,192	23,943	822
Salaries and benefits	2,888,568	479,172	583,815	336,071	103,809	184,295	6,247
Travel and meetings	328,463	826,231	80,171	34,265	7,160	129,038	1,002
	5,059,264	1,729,994	850,121	477,041	132,904	400,131	51,462
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	\$ (54,339)	\$ (20,926)	\$ (121)	\$ (1,303)	\$ (1,594)	\$ (131)	\$ (1,462)

Schedule 1 (Continued)

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD**Statement of Operations****Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)**

year ended March 31, 2013

	Alternative Dispute Resolution	Connectivity	Economic Partnerships	Advice on Policy	Commemorative	Treaties	Lease Termination
Revenue							
Contribution/Grant	\$ 200,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 26,318	\$ 11,125	\$ 312,000	\$ 842,735
Miscellaneous	1,407	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of Publications	780	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trade Show	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Registration fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	202,187	150,000	150,000	26,318	11,125	312,000	842,735
Expenses							
Advertising, promotion and publications	1,413	362	105	-	-	48	-
Allocation of administrative expenses	-	-	-	2,392	-	-	-
Insurance	312	86	294	-	7	214	-
Miscellaneous	-	-	150	-	-	-	-
Office expenses	16,941	10,903	8,176	-	200	12,465	-
Professional fees	17,096	27,595	31,475	-	1,785	47,405	-
Regional service delivery	-	-	-	-	2,090	-	-
Rent	16,643	9,003	10,824	-	964	14,674	846,375
Salaries and benefits	120,546	64,843	82,156	6,042	6,260	128,878	-
Travel and meetings	45,982	37,237	17,683	19,398	-	110,666	-
	218,933	150,029	150,863	27,832	11,306	314,350	846,375
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	\$ (16,746)	\$ (29)	\$ (863)	\$ (1,514)	\$ (181)	\$ (2,350)	\$ (3,640)

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Statement of Operations
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)
 year ended March 31, 2013

	Joint Task Force	Specific Claims	Comprehensive Claims Policy	Additions to Reserve	Total	
					2013	2012
Revenue						
Contribution/Grant	\$ 112,200	\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 457,000	\$ 10,612,688	\$ 10,600,640
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	4,050	91,330	61,966
Trade Show	-	-	-	-	19,018	-
Registration fees	-	-	-	-	515,620	399,847
	112,200	100,000	250,000	461,050	11,238,656	11,062,453
Expenses						
Advertising, promotion and publications	31	25	65	106	8,723	26,284
Allocation of administrative expenses	-	-	-	-	2,392	16,539
Insurance	196	54	212	419	12,423	20,574
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	150	1,200
Office expenses	5,259	2,131	5,941	13,063	527,508	619,433
Professional fees	1,953	20,853	62,427	154,904	811,968	1,058,481
Regional service delivery	-	-	-	-	1,188,052	1,142,303
Rent	20,725	4,916	9,419	28,132	1,572,222	637,534
Salaries and benefits	79,217	38,301	93,825	173,616	5,375,661	5,336,429
Travel and meetings	5,438	34,826	78,320	91,094	1,846,974	2,386,744
	112,819	101,106	250,209	461,334	11,346,073	11,245,521
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	\$ (619)	\$ (1,106)	\$ (209)	\$ (284)	\$ (107,417)	\$ (183,068)

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Statement of Operations
Other Funding Agencies
 year ended March 31, 2013

	Health Canada	CPAC	Public Safety	HRSDC	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Environment Canada
Revenue						
Contribution/grant	\$ 3,404,174	\$ 37,289	\$ 75,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 573,440	\$ 277,000
Sale of publications	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	10,096	-	-	-	-	-
Trade show fees	-	-	-	-	-	-
Registration fees	-	-	-	-	-	-
	3,414,270	37,289	75,000	250,000	573,440	277,000
Expenses						
Advertising, promotion and publications	1,640	5	21	27	-	105
Allocation of administrative expenses	310,389	3,390	6,818	21,000	48,793	26,762
Amortization of capital assets	29,039	195	-	-	-	2,897
Insurance	4,793	69	30	268	-	496
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office expenses	165,839	1,515	1,428	15,643	8,363	14,594
Professional fees	240,553	1,168	3,155	33,860	6,455	6,494
Regional service delivery	61,731	-	-	-	102,185	-
Rent	375,039	6,392	2,428	20,661	25,684	26,452
Salaries and benefits	1,867,826	24,534	19,443	126,309	201,071	170,636
Travel and meetings	357,421	21	42,617	32,405	180,897	28,646
	3,414,270	37,289	75,940	250,173	573,448	277,082
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (940)	\$ (173)	\$ (8)	\$ (82)

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Statement of Operations
Other Funding Agencies
 year ended March 31, 2013

	Nuclear Waste Management Organization	Justice Canada	Commission for Environmental Cooperation	UNBC	Other	Total	
						2013	2012 (Unaudited) (Note 2)
Revenue							
Contribution/grant	\$ 142,962	\$ 10,120	\$ 19,849	\$ 89,900	\$ 46,120	\$ 4,925,854	\$ 10,244,389
Sale of publications	-	-	-	-	-	-	515
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	880,931	891,027	1,080,319
Trade show fees	-	-	-	-	214,399	214,399	-
Registration fees	-	-	-	-	187,186	187,186	309,401
	142,962	10,120	19,849	89,900	1,328,636	6,218,466	11,634,624
Expenses							
Advertising, promotion and publications	10	-	26	-	36,961	38,795	82,237
Allocation of administrative expenses	19,213	920	5,250	5,890	(450,817)	(2,392)	(16,539)
Amortization of capital assets	-	-	-	-	165,470	197,601	264,014
Insurance	160	9	30	-	1,276	7,131	10,742
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	4,545	4,545	1,364
Office expenses	3,904	256	1,479	7,322	131,200	351,543	420,189
Professional fees	10,048	367	-	6,042	520,957	829,099	2,039,234
Regional service delivery	-	-	-	-	(10,473)	153,443	352,740
Rent	10,426	1,220	2,950	-	186,753	658,005	724,173
Salaries and benefits	71,376	6,068	10,114	40,435	329,161	2,866,973	3,809,031
Travel and meetings	27,825	2,172	-	30,721	755,201	1,457,926	3,981,612
	142,962	11,012	19,849	90,410	1,670,234	6,562,669	11,668,797
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	\$ -	\$ (892)	\$ -	\$ (510)	\$ (341,598)	\$ (344,203)	\$ (34,173)

NATIONAL INDIAN BROTHERHOOD
Statement of Operations
National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund
 year ended March 31, 2013

	General Fund	Language and Literacy Fund	Youth Healing Fund	Research Sponsor Fund	Total	
					2013	2012 (Unaudited) (Note 2)
Revenue						
Sponsorship	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Miscellaneous	1,500	-	-	-	1,500	3,331
	1,500	-	-	-	1,500	3,331
Expenses						
Bad debt	-	-	-	-	-	19,200
Scholarships	-	-	-	-	-	16,000
Professional services	812	812	812	812	3,248	6,035
Miscellaneous	33	30	30	30	123	134
	845	842	842	842	3,371	41,369
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	\$ 655	\$ (842)	\$ (842)	\$ (842)	\$ (1,871)	\$ (38,038)



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