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## Assembly of First Nations

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## Assemblée des Premières Nations

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**SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY  
DECEMBER 4, 5, AND 6, 2018, OTTAWA, ON**

**Resolution no. 46/2018**

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**TITLE:** United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages

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**SUBJECT:** Languages

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**MOVED BY:** Chief Valerie Richer, Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, ON

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**SECONDED BY:** Chief Nelson Toulouse, Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation, ON

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**DECISION** Carried by Consensus

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**WHEREAS:**

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states:
- i. Article 13 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
  - ii. Article 14 (1) Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
- B. The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its 94 Calls to Action include specific Calls (13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 84 & 85) about Indigenous peoples' language revitalization and was fully supported by the Chiefs-in-Assembly through Resolution 01/2015, *Support for the Full Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action*.
- C. In 1998, a state of emergency on First Nations languages was declared by the Chiefs-in-Assembly, Resolution 35/1998, *First Nation Languages* which states:
- i. "That the Government of Canada act immediately to recognize, officially and legally, the First Nations languages of Canada, and to make a commitment to provide the resources necessary to reverse First Nations languages loss and to prevent the extinction of our languages..."

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**Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 4th of December 2018 in Ottawa, ON.**

**PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF**

**46-2018**

*Page 1 of 2*

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- i. "That the Government of Canada act immediately to recognize, officially and legally, the First Nations languages of Canada, and to make a commitment to provide the resources necessary to reverse First Nations languages loss and to prevent the extinction of our languages..."
- D. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reports that three-quarters of Indigenous languages in Canada are "definitely", "severely" or "critically" endangered.
- E. UNESCO participates in the celebration of International Years and Decades, as proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The year 2019 has been declared the International Year of Indigenous Languages by UNESCO.
- F. Proposals for international decades are typically advanced by one or more Member States of the United Nations. Proposals are submitted to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which recommends their adoption by the General Assembly. There is usually a two-year interval between the submission of a proposal and the declaration of a decade. The declaration itself can be made either by the General Assembly or a specialized agency of the United Nations, e.g. UNESCO.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:**

1. Call upon the General Assembly of the United Nations to make a timely declaration of an International Decade of Indigenous Languages.
2. Call upon the federal government to propose, advocate, and support a timely United Nations declaration of an International Decade of Indigenous Languages.
3. Direct the Assembly of First Nations to engage with the United Nations, the federal government, and all appropriate bodies, organizations and governments to advocate for an International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

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**PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF**