
Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JULY 25, 26, & 27, 2017, REGINA, SK

Resolution no. 30/2017

TITLE: Inherent Authority to Define Citizenship

SUBJECT: Citizenship

MOVED BY: Chief Peter Collins, Fort William First Nation, ON

SECONDED BY: Chief Tom Bressette, Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation, ON

DECISION Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:
- i. Article 33 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to determine their own identity or membership in accordance with their customs and traditions. This does not impair the right of indigenous individuals to obtain citizenship of the States in which they live.
 - ii. Article 33 (2): Indigenous peoples have the right to determine the structures and to select the membership of their institutions in accordance with their own procedures.
- B. There is a long history of hardship and discrimination imposed on Indigenous peoples by the *Indian Act's* Indian status provisions.
- C. Federal legislation enacted in the past and implemented still today was designed to assimilate and erode First Nation citizenship.
- D. Canada's *Bill C-31: An Act to Amend the Indian Act* was passed to end discrimination against Indian women, and new provisions ensured that all Indian peoples would continue to suffer losses related to Indian status over generations. However, the discrimination of inter-marriages continues.

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PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF

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- E. Indian children lose Indian status after two generations of out-marriage, and with the current rate of out-marriage many First Nations communities will disappear within a few generations due to rapid decline in numbers of Status Indians within their citizenship.
- F. First Nations have always asserted their jurisdiction to determine and define their citizenship, regardless of Canada's unilateral imposition of the *Indian Act* that determines Indian status.

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

- 1. Affirm the authority of First Nations to determine their own citizenship and eligibility for registration.
- 2. Direct the Assembly of First Nations to call on the Government of Canada to end the practice of legislative assimilation and to provide adequate funding to First Nation governments to establish their own citizenship laws and processes.
- 3. Support the work of Fort William First Nation and all other First Nations who now exercise their jurisdiction over their citizenship and restore their children with their rightful heritage, which was lost due to the colonial and racist impacts of sections 6(1) and (2) of the *Indian Act*.

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PERRY BÉLLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF