



ASSEMBLY OF
FIRST NATIONS

WORKING TOGETHER: OUR RIGHTS, OUR WAY, OUR FUTURE

ANNUAL REPORT

2017 – 2018





The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is the national body representing First Nations governments and approximately one million people living on reserve and in urban and rural areas. The National Chief is elected every three years and receives direction from the Chiefs-in-Assembly. The AFN is dedicated to advancing the priorities and aspirations of First Nations through review, study, response and advocacy on a broad range of issues and policy matters.

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AFN Annual General Assembly artwork:
Chiefs Sun by Darlene Gait, Esquimalt Nation



Table of Contents

National Chief Report	1
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Regional Chiefs' Reports

Regional Chief Kluane Adamek, Yukon	7
Regional Chief Roger Augustine, New Brunswick and P.E.I.....	10
Regional Chief Bobby Cameron, Saskatchewan	12
Regional Chief Isadore Day, Ontario	14
Regional Chief Bill Erasmus, Northwest Territories	18
Regional Chief Morley Googoo, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.....	20
Regional Chief Kevin Hart, Manitoba	25
Regional Chief Ghislain Picard, Quebec	28
Regional Chief Marlene Poitras, Alberta.....	30
Regional Chief Terry Teegee, British Columbia	34

Council Reports

AFN Council of Elders.....	40
AFN Women's Council	42
AFN National Youth Council	44

CEO Report	47
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Sector Reports

Communications Sector	52
Economic Sector	55
Education Sector.....	61



Table of Contents

Environment (and Fisheries) Sector.....	65
Health Sector	68
Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services Sector.....	74
Lands, Territories and Resources Sector.....	82
Languages Sector	84
Legal Affairs and Justice Sector.....	86
Policy & Research Sector	
Fiscal Relations	91
International Advocacy	93
National Advocacy	96
Social Development Sector.....	98
Financial Statements	101



National Chief Report



National Chief Perry Bellegarde

Assembly of First Nations

Chiefs, fellow leaders, friends and relatives, welcome to our 39th Annual General Assembly. Kinanāskomitin.

We are honoured to be here on the territory of the Musqueam First Nation, Squamish Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nation and to be hosted by the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations.

This past year through our concerted advocacy efforts, and with the support and hard work of many Chiefs, Councillors, First Nations leaders and hardworking women and men, we have achieved substantial progress.

We have been successful in maintaining First Nations priorities at the top of the national agenda. Almost \$17 Billion over seven fiscal years has been committed in the last three federal budgets for Indigenous peoples in areas including education, housing, infrastructure, languages and health care and mental wellness services.

Through our work at the Chiefs Committee on Fiscal Relations, First Nations can now carry forward funding from one year to the next and we've unlocked 10-year funding agreements as direct transfers between governments for more than 100 eligible First Nations.

Our Chiefs Committee on Education has made progress towards First Nations control of First Nations education, building on an investment of \$2.6 Billion for on-reserve education in the 2016 Federal Budget with another \$.7 Billion in direct transfers to First Nations to help close the education gap.

Our Assembly of First Nations has worked with partners on the co-development of a federal law to revitalize, reclaim and maintain our First Nations

languages. That law will facilitate ongoing funding to support language revitalization efforts and is expected to be introduced this fall.

We also secured widespread support for Bill 262, a law that will support implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, as called for by the Chiefs-in-Assembly. As I write this, the Bill has passed third reading in the House of Commons and awaits consideration by the Senate.

Progress is being made towards our Indigenous Peoples House at 100 Wellington, a place of prominence opposite Canada's Parliament buildings, which will serve as a centre for Indigenous peoples in Ottawa, the uses and functions of which will be determined by First Nations, in cooperation with Inuit and Métis peoples.

We are working hard to support all First Nations in their exercise of the right to self-determination. As First Nations undertake the work necessary to address badly-flawed federal policies – comprehensive claims, specific claims, additions to reserve and the inherent right to self-government – we are all moving beyond the *Indian Act* and realizing all of our rights affirmed by Treaty, First Nations law, the *Constitution* and international human rights law.

Things are finally moving, but still the socio-economic gap in quality of life remains for First Nations. We have much more work to do.

A \$1.4 Billion federal commitment to child welfare is finally reaching First Nations where it can help to end discrimination in the delivery of services for our children in care. But a jointly designed model is still needed to fix the system as First Nations exercise



jurisdiction and move to prevention, not apprehension of our children.

Nine thousand homes recently built on First Nations must be augmented by funding for at least 80,000 more, and the number of drinking water advisories must become zero.

Chronic underfunding of First Nations police services has started to be addressed with a commitment of \$290 million over five years this January. But we continue to press for recognition of First Nations policing as an essential service.

First Nations continue to pursue paths to self-determination which enable us to create our own laws, assert our jurisdiction and move beyond the control of the *Indian Act*. This work must be done right. It cannot be rushed.

Our work to establish a new fiscal relationship with the Crown needs to ensure that First Nations fully benefit from our sharing of land and resource wealth.

Our Assembly of First Nations is once again driving changes that benefit all First Nations peoples. We are laser-focused on *Closing the Gap*, and on championing First Nations rights. Opening doors and working together with First Nations, our commitment remains on being responsive, relevant and respectful.

As we gather for this Annual General Assembly I am reminded of the strength we as First Nations peoples have gathered from our Elders' teachings, from our Youth's tenacity, and from the steady guiding hands of our mothers and fathers. This strength can be focussed to the benefit of all. The unity of our voice will carry this good work forward.

Kinanāskomitin,

National Chief Perry Bellegarde



Regional Chiefs' Reports



Regional Chief Kluane Adamek

Yukon

Dànnch'è,

On behalf of the AFN Yukon Region, I offer a warm greeting to all the Elders, Veterans, Chiefs, Leaders, Youth, and delegates attending the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) 39th Annual General Assembly. Thank you to the Musqueam First Nation, Squamish Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nations for welcoming us on their traditional territory, and to the BC AFN Region for hosting us this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my respect and appreciation to former Regional Chief Mike Smith and the outstanding work he did before his untimely passing. We deeply acknowledge his incredible dedication to advancing Yukon First Nation priorities. He was a trailblazer and his legacy lives on through his family and his contributions to our people.

Regional Update

I am currently responsible for the following Assembly of First Nations portfolios:

- Co-chair, Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment;
- First Nation Northern Strategies and Issues;
- Citizenship and Membership; and
- Modern Treaties and Self-Determination.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In January 2018, I began serving as Interim Regional Chief after being appointed by Yukon First Nations leadership to the role. I am humbled to have recently been acclaimed as Regional Chief and sworn-in to a three-year term on June 28, 2018. I look forward to supporting the advancement of Yukon First Nation interests on a national level.

Over the last six months, Yukon First Nations leadership has engaged in a number of strategic planning sessions. These sessions have been focused on establishing and solidifying a modernized structure for the AFN Yukon regional office to continue serving the needs of Yukon First Nations.

Yukon First Nation leaders came together to formalize a process for dialogue and setting the strategic direction for the AFN Yukon Region through quarterly AFN Yukon First Nation Chiefs' Summits and an AFN Yukon First Nations Annual Summit. At the first AFN Yukon First Nations Annual Summit held on June 28, 2018, leadership formalized a number of governance documents for the AFN Yukon regional office, including the AFN Yukon Region Terms of Reference. Together, we have also been working on strengthening our approach with AFN national councils and committees to ensure our region continues to be well represented and important information from these councils and committees is shared with Yukon First Nations.

To help complement these ongoing efforts and ensure Yukon First Nations receive timely information on federal legislative issues that impact them, the regional office has worked on modernizing communications outreach activities. A new AFN Yukon Region website, regular information bulletins and an enhanced social media presence are helping facilitate greater awareness and access to information.

This year, we celebrate 20 years since the signing of the first four Yukon First Nation land claims and self-government agreements. Guided by the incredible leadership of those that helped realize these agreements, we continue to press for their full implementation.

Regional Chief Kluane Adamek

Yukon

During the April 29, 2018 AFN National Executive meeting, I tabled a motion to reaffirm the creation of a Modern Treaty Implementation Working Group. The group will assist in raising the profile of modern treaty implementation and other matters, at the direction of modern treaty nations. In these and other national forums, our regional office will continue to listen to Yukon First Nations and advocate for priority matters of education, health, justice, child welfare, and housing as key components of self-government in Yukon.

Early in my interim period, we began to advocate for loan repayment and forgiveness for the 11 First Nations who have land claims and self-government agreements in the Yukon. The federal government committed to loan repayments through Budget 2018, and we look forward to having this process formalized. We remain committed to supporting all modern treaty holders in ensuring loan forgiveness and repayment rolls out in a fair and timely manner.

As Co-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment (ACE), I will continue to be guided by the AFN Elders Council as we work in advancing Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Supported by the AFN Environment Sector, ACE is committed to enhancing First Nation self-determination and jurisdiction within the context of the natural environment.

In May 2018, we had the pleasure of hosting ACE members for their regular meeting and to attend Vadzaih Choo Drin – Caribou Days on Vuntut Gwitchin territory in Old Crow, Yukon. While in Old Crow, ACE met with the Vuntut Gwitchin Government on supporting their efforts to protect the Porcupine Caribou Herd calving grounds from resource development. The United States government is moving towards allowing oil and gas exploration in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, where the calving grounds are located. As part of our advocacy efforts, the AFN National Chief and I co-drafted an open letter to the U.S. government on this issue and continue

to press for protection of these sacred lands and the caribou for future generations.

On April 17, 2018, as Co-Chair of ACE, I presented AFN's amendments to Bill C-69, a proposed federal legislation affecting the *Impact Assessment Act*, *Canadian Energy Regulator Act*, and the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act*.

The amendments focused on the following themes and elements:

- *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*
- Protecting First Nations' inherent and constitutionally-protected rights
- Legislating joint decision-making
- Reducing excessive ministerial discretion
- Strengthening the protection of Indigenous Knowledge Systems

The Indigenous Languages Act remains a top priority for our region. Our regional office received direction to assist and support Yukon First Nations in the coordination of preparatory work as we look ahead to the upcoming federal engagement sessions.

Over the next few months, Yukon First Nation representatives will continue assisting with the work of the AFN Chiefs Committee on Languages regarding this federal legislation. While this is being done, the AFN Yukon Region will work together with all parties to ensure we create space for nations to participate in federal engagement and pre-engagement activities in our region.

Women play a significant role in our communities and it's important to ensure we show leadership on issues of equity and gender balance. We need to always strive towards ending all forms of violence. I am pleased that our National Executive Committee is taking action on this. On April 29th, we passed my motion on "Ending Sexual and Other Violence in the Workplace through Raising and Ensuring Active

Regional Chief Kluane Adamek

Yukon

Supports.” This motion sets a course of action to review AFN’s policies so we uphold the highest protection possible from sexual discrimination and violence, in all forms. This is an important step in ensuring we create safe environments that are free from harassment for everyone.

Yukon First Nations continue to be supportive of advancing our interests nationally. We will continue to advocate for resolutions to address issues impacting those off reserve and in our northern regions. Federal policies, processes, and AFN activities must reflect the unique needs of northerners and respect the land claims and self-government agreements currently in place. With 11 First Nation governments in the Yukon, we represent one of the largest regions with modern treaties. We have a lot to share about entering into modern treaties and our experiences in implementing our agreements.

Moving forward, the AFN Yukon regional office is positioning itself to participate in the federal budgetary cycle, with continued advocacy on direct funding to the North for housing and the health and well-being of our people. With the support of the National Chief and the Assembly of First Nations, these issues can continue to be supported, addressed, and acknowledged on a national level, at the direction of Yukon First Nations.

While much work remains to be done, I am excited about my new role as the Yukon Regional Chief. I look forward to working with Yukon First Nations and with First Nations from coast to coast to coast, continuing to advance the interests of our peoples, at their direction.

The Yukon Region wishes the candidates for National Chief well and looks forward to a successful assembly. Through unity, we find strength.

Gunalchéesh, Shawniithan, Mussi Cho

Kluane Adamek
AFN Yukon Regional Chief



Regional Chief Roger Augustine

New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island

"Aboriginal leaders today have a responsibility to ensure our children are not deprived of any knowledge by maintaining whatever technology is required to stay informed with all events surrounding the Indigenous Nations of the world."

"Kiskuk, Inu' Saqamawk aq Wnaqapenk kekunmi'tij meski'k lu'ko'kwaqan kulaman ma kinjanaq wktoqalamaki'k espek kinamasu'ti. Na kinjanaq ekji'taq msit koqwey ta'n teliaq ta'n eyamu'ti'jk Inu'k wla ta'n telki'k wksitqamu." —Roger Augustine

Since being elected in 2008, I have been constantly amazed at the teamwork demonstrated by the leadership of the Assembly of First Nations. The tireless efforts associated in dealing with ever-changing politics, and an ever-increasing desire to be recognized as the original stewards of this land, have enforced our resolve to our provincial and federal counterparts that we will be the masters of our own destiny.

Our national leadership has committed to ensuring that the rights of the people we represent are being honoured by compelling governments to prove their efforts to address these issues through implementation of plans and policies with respect to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Nation to Nation building, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, climate change, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action.

It is a great honour for me to hold the position of AFN Regional Chief for all the Wolastoqey and Mi'gmaq First Nations in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, and to represent them and all First Nations in this effort.

Fisheries

I am honoured to share the national Fisheries portfolio with BC Regional Chief Terry Teegee. In the Atlantic Region, ongoing efforts have focused on determining the meaning of the right to a "moderate livelihood". Continued talks from coast to coast are solidifying our stance that we will be included in all decisions with respect to our traditional rights. The national office has demonstrated strong support of our efforts to be represented at all levels throughout the country.

Economic Development

We have been very fortunate in our region to couple economic opportunities while respecting environmental issues. The Tobique First Nation has invested in a windmill opportunity, creating an investment that not only contributes to employment but is an environmentally friendly example of our traditional values. Although small business and entrepreneurship continues to be the main focus in individual First Nations, our leadership continues to promote Aboriginal inclusivity in big business.

Nation to Nation Building

The Atlantic Region has experienced a welcome return from the past. The Atlantic Mi'gmaq Chiefs recently met in their entirety to demonstrate to the governments of our region a strong unity in demanding prior consultation and inclusivity in all matters pertaining, but not limited to: aquaculture/fisheries; agriculture & maple syrup; cannabis; ecologically-friendly businesses; gaming; green energy/technology (wind, hydro, tidal); natural resources; forestry; mining; and tourism.

Regional Chief Roger Augustine

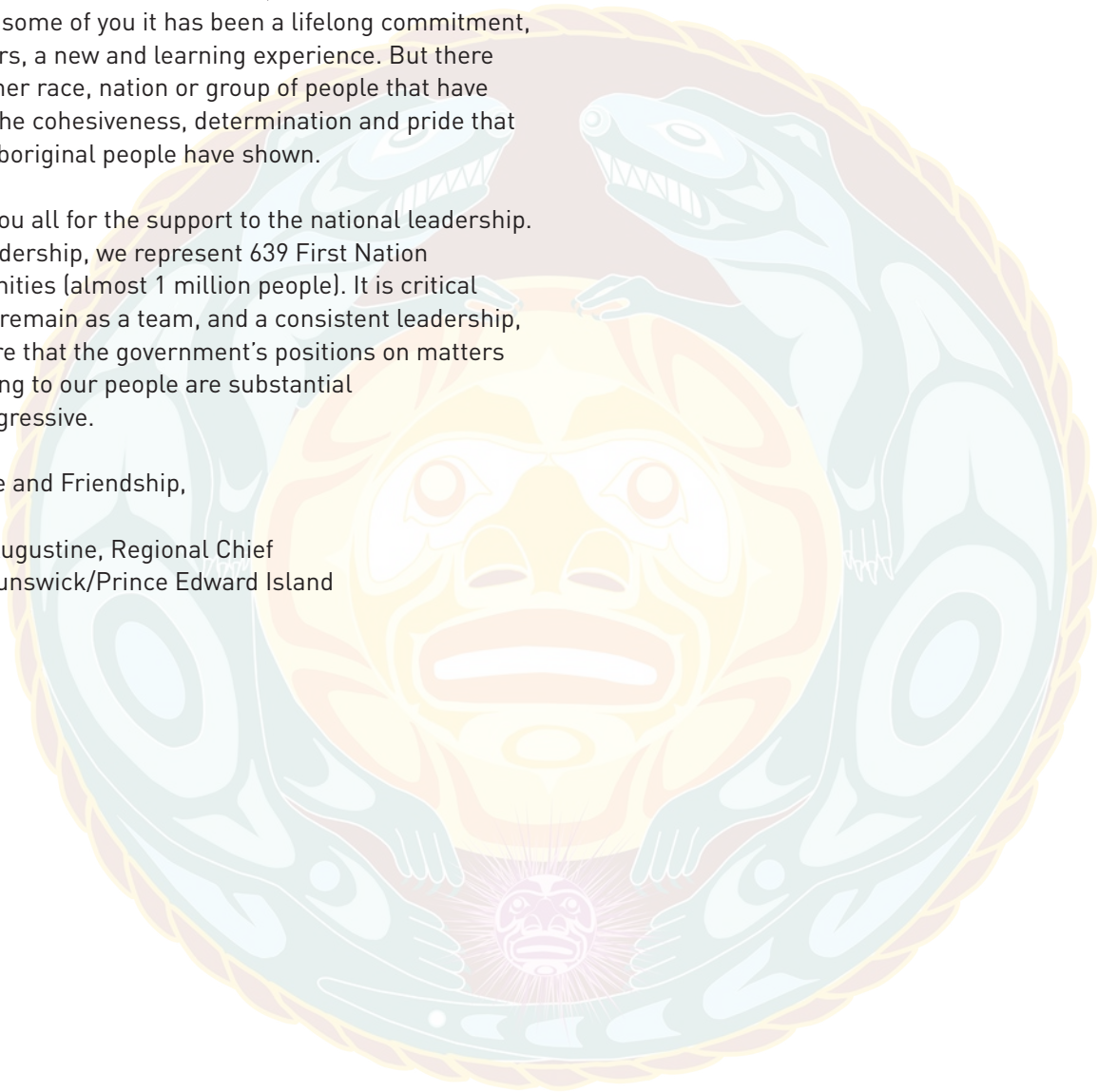
New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island

I wish to express my sincere congratulations to all the Chiefs for their loyalty and dedication to their respective First Nations. Yours is a tireless, sometimes thankless job. For some of you it has been a lifelong commitment, for others, a new and learning experience. But there is no other race, nation or group of people that have shown the cohesiveness, determination and pride that we as Aboriginal people have shown.

Thank you all for the support to the national leadership. As a leadership, we represent 639 First Nation communities (almost 1 million people). It is critical that we remain as a team, and a consistent leadership, to ensure that the government's positions on matters pertaining to our people are substantial and progressive.

In Peace and Friendship,

Roger Augustine, Regional Chief
New Brunswick/Prince Edward Island





Regional Chief Bobby Cameron

Saskatchewan

Tansi, on behalf of the Chiefs of the Saskatchewan region and the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Executive and staff, we extend warm greetings to our Elders, leadership, youth, and citizens participating in the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) 39th Annual General Assembly on the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.

In my role as Regional Chief of Saskatchewan, it's an honour and a privilege to continue the lessons learned as a child. Lessons steeped in our traditional ways of hunting, trapping, and fishing. Lessons of gratitude and reverence for the Creator and our lands. These traditions passed on through family and community have provided the knowledge necessary to deeply understand the importance of the advocacy work we do to protect our Inherent and Treaty Rights.

My service to First Nations in Saskatchewan began in 2011, both as Second Vice Chief and as Chief of FSIN. In that time, the reverence for my role as the AFN Saskatchewan Regional Chief is reflected through my work as Chair of both the Chiefs Committee on Education and the Chiefs Committee on Human Resources Development. It is also my honour to serve on the AFN Management Committee. It is with continued gratitude for the opportunity to serve our people and the continued goal of implementing and enhancing our Inherent and Treaty Rights that we move forward together.

Education

Education is one of our most sacred Inherent and Treaty Rights. It is our path forward and it is the legacy that we leave for our grandchildren. At the 2016 AFN Annual General Assembly in Niagara Falls,

the Chiefs-in-Assembly called for an honourable process to develop recommendations to support First Nations Education Reform. This direction is mandated through AFN Resolution 16/2016. In response to this call, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has been working with the AFN Education staff, the National Indian Education Council (NIEC) and the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE).

Part of the education tool is to know the history of our Treaty relationship with the Crown. Our advocacy has always included having the Governor General meet with our people on their ancestral lands. The true Inherent and Treaty relationship with the Crown must be demonstrated through the role of the Governor General. Another area of the utmost importance is jurisdiction. Jurisdiction must remain with each First Nation in all matters that fall under the Inherent and Treaty Rights agenda umbrella.

We have worked tirelessly to push for increased funding to address the disparity for our First Nations schools and students. We have worked together to collaborate and coordinate towards a cohesive message that addresses the different regional needs while also finding the common ground that allows for us to support and advocate on each other's behalf.

The path forward will see continued work in the area of funding and greater transparency from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). Education is our key to success and to the protection of our cultures, languages and traditional knowledge. It is this that inspires us and will continue to until our jurisdiction is no longer challenged, our children are learning in classrooms that are culturally relevant, and we have the necessary resources to provide them with the education they have the right to and so deserve.

The Inherent and Treaty right to education does not cease at high school graduation. Our Inherent and Treaty Right to education is lifelong. Therefore, we are currently working on addressing the disparity in post-secondary graduation rates and available funding for First Nations individuals who are eligible to attend post-secondary. As our successes in our work towards elementary and high school funding increase, so too will the need to create opportunities for access and funding to post-secondary education. We are confident in our ability to come together and bring about the necessary changes that will protect and promote our Inherent and Treaty Right to lifelong education.

Human Resources Development

The AFN Chiefs Committee on Human Resources Development (CCHRD) met with the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour in Ottawa on December 7, 2017 to be updated on the current status of funding agreements and reporting requirements. The take-away from that meeting was that two-year funding agreements do not work and that burdensome reporting requirements do not contribute to successful outcomes. It was discussed that 10-year funding agreements make more sense for program strategy development.

While we welcomed the announcement in the 2018 Federal Budget of a proposed investment of \$447 million over five years to create a new Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program as a step in the right direction to closing the employment and pay disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, we also recognize that clarity is needed for the federal strategy in rolling out these monies. This strategy must be focused on training for higher-quality and better-paying jobs and measurable outcomes that can speak to a true investment in the success of First Nations people. The CCHRD will continue the work on

a First Nations policy paper on a New Labour Market Strategy, the Funding Formula Analysis and Funding Options for consideration and to receive a legal analysis paper to consider the authorities necessary to support a new distinct First Nations Labour Market Strategy.



Regional Chief Isadore Day

Ontario

On behalf of the 133 Chiefs in Ontario, I extend warm greetings to all First Nation Youth, Elders, Leadership, and citizens participating in the AFN's 39th Annual General Assembly, held on the traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations that were never ceded through treaty, war or surrender.

This Assembly is a very important one. Not only is it an election year for National Chief, but there are many critical issues which include federal legislation that will directly impact First Nations and a federal 2 per cent funding cap that perpetuates poverty and despair in far too many communities across the country.

In the Ontario region, there has been some significant progress in several areas since my last report at the December 2017 Special Chiefs Assembly. We are forging ahead on child welfare funding, major infrastructure, and wealth creation.

Sovereign Wealth Fund

On January 2, 2018, the province of Ontario announced that it had completed the sale of 14.3 million common shares of Hydro One Limited, representing approximately 2.4% of the outstanding common shares, to OFN Power Holdings LP, a limited partnership wholly-owned by Ontario First Nations Sovereign Wealth LP, which is in turn owned by 129 First Nations in Ontario at a purchase price of \$259,038,216.

This transaction fulfills the province's commitment in its agreement-in-principle with the First Nations in Ontario, as represented by the Chiefs-in-Assembly, which was previously announced on July 12, 2016. It demonstrates the goodwill envisioned by the political accord to promote stronger economic relations and is

one of many steps on Ontario's journey of healing and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. It will provide meaningful opportunities to First Nations for collective wealth creation and to advance economic development initiatives.

The province has also provided seed capital of approximately \$29 million in cash to a new investment fund wholly-owned by Ontario First Nations Sovereign Wealth LP.

The establishment of the Sovereign Wealth Fund is a very real example of what can be accomplished at a nation-to-nation, government-to-government level.

Along with the revenues generated from the Ontario First Nation Limited Partnership (OFNLP) with Ontario Lottery and Gaming, the collective effort of our leadership will enable our next generation the chance to benefit and become fully involved in the 21st century economy.

Wataynikaneyap Transmission Project

On March 22, 2018, the federal and provincial governments, along with the 23 remote northern First Nations, announced \$1.6 billion in funding to complete the Wataynikaneyap Transmission Project to 16 communities by 2023. Sustainable, reliable hydro power will allow these communities to join the 21st century with all Ontarians and Canadians.

This is the largest First Nation-led and First Nation-owned infrastructure project in Ontario history. Access to clean, reliable and affordable electricity will open up new economic opportunities. It will lower the cost of housing and help ensure a clean supply of drinking water. One of the communities most in need,

Regional Chief Isadore Day

Ontario

Pikangikum First Nation, will be the first connected to the grid by the end of this year.

Long-term, reliable clean energy will mean cleaner air and a healthier place to live now—and in the future. Reliable power means good housing, clean water, economic development, education, health care, food security—the list goes on. The benefits are enormous and will create happy, healthy communities for future generations.

Child Welfare Funding and Reform

On April 12, 2018, Ontario, Canada, and the Chiefs of Ontario signed a tripartite agreement to jointly reform the policy and funding approaches of First Nations Child and Family Services in Ontario. This recognizes, in particular, the need to shift focus to more comprehensive approaches that support better outcomes by focusing on an expanded range of prevention services.

As part of this work, Canada, Ontario, and First Nations are also completing an Ontario Special Study, which will provide options for new First Nations child and family well-being policy and funding approaches that are child-centered, community-directed, and support better outcomes by focusing on prevention. It is expected that the outcomes required from this joint commitment will be completed within 12-18 months.

At the joint signing, I stated: *The importance of laying a framework for recognizing First Nation jurisdiction on Child Welfare is the most vital policy discussion that we face; as Ontario First Nations, Canada and Ontario meet on the matter. A cooperative and coordinated outcome will be our primary effort as we organize these first steps – the authority to choose the best path forward will ultimately rest with our First Nation leadership and Child Welfare authorities. There can be no other option but full First Nation control.*

National Suicide Prevention Action Plan

On May 22, 2018, as chair of the AFN Chiefs Committee on Health, I participated in the launch of the National Suicide Prevention Action Plan, spearheaded by NDP MP Charlie Angus. Canada remains one of the few countries in the Western world that does not have a national suicide prevention strategy. This is simply unacceptable, especially given the high rates of suicide among First Nation and Inuit youth.

At the last AFN Annual General Assembly, held in Regina, July 25–27, 2017, the Chiefs-in-Assembly unanimously passed Resolution 2/2017, *Federal Response to the Crisis of Suicide*, which calls upon the federal government to immediately respond to the ongoing suicide crisis “as a priority of the highest order”. As recently as the AFN National Executive Committee meeting in Ottawa on March 1, 2018, AFN Youth Council Co-chair Mark Hill reminded the National Chief and Regional Chiefs that mental wellness is the number one priority amongst youth nation-wide.

In April 2016, the Chiefs of Ontario provided a “Poverty Action Now” discussion paper to both the federal and provincial governments. It simply states: “Poverty is at the root of every tragic First Nations statistic. Poverty is killing First Nations people in Ontario.”

Our paper calls for a two-pronged strategy that includes immediate targeted funding to address crisis-level needs for communities severely lacking in basic infrastructure and supportive services, along with a First Nations-led process for long-term and sustainable poverty reduction strategies.

Addressing two of Canada’s colonial culprits—the *Indian Act* and the Indian Residential School legacy—helps narrow the focus about where we need to address today’s issues around First Nation suicide. Failure to take such a comprehensive and inclusive approach renders our youth and First Nations in danger.

Regional Chief Isadore Day

Ontario

With rates of suicide on an alarming increase, a National Suicide Prevention Strategy is a must. We know this. We need Canada and the provinces to clear a place at the table to discuss this during the transformation of Canada's health care system. As chair of the AFN Chiefs Committee on Health (CCOH), I remain ready and committed to do my part to support all First Nations across the country. We need an undivided collective on both suicide prevention and creating prosperity.

At this time, I want to thank all of the AFN Health Secretariat staff, along with all the CCOH Chiefs and technicians. Much hard work has been done on Health Transformation, Non-Insured Health Benefits, and many other priorities that are highlighted in this Annual Report. It has been an honour to serve as Chair.

Ontario Priorities

We are all reminded of the urgency we have in regard to our relationship with both the federal and provincial governments. The federal Liberals have 14 months left in office. There must be a renewed effort to focus on child welfare, environmental protection, justice, wealth creation, housing, and eliminating boil water advisories in order to meet the March 2021 deadline of clean water for all. As you may know, the five-year timeframe was agreed upon when I challenged Prime Minister Trudeau to deliver on finally meeting this basic human right.

Specifically on matters of child welfare, we must forge ahead with both the federal and provincial governments towards securing long-term child welfare funding under our own jurisdiction. Our First Nations and regions must have the resources to bring our children home. Until this happens, we will continue our difficult struggle to heal, and build happy, healthy communities. We have opened up those doors. Our First Nations now have a trilateral and bilateral processes that are making this a reality.

We must find a way to work with this new majority PC government. I've already spoken to Premier Designate Doug Ford and reminded him that First Nations have treaty and inherent rights that must be respected and acted upon. I have expressed the importance of mutual interest on matters of wealth and resources of this province because our ancestors agreed to share the lands in peace and friendship; and that treaties are relevant agreements that formed a potential for wealth that must be shared equally. It's time to ensure we receive our fair share of the province's wealth.

I've continued to voice to Ontario, before this election, during, and in this post-election, that all our communities must benefit from Resource Revenue Sharing. We must share equally in the province's revenues, which includes taxes from cannabis sales. Progress has been made with the previous Liberal government. This included the establishment of the Sovereign Wealth Fund as a result of the sale of 2.5% of Hydro One shares. This would never have happened if I had not directly challenged former Premier Kathleen Wynne.

Over the past 10 years the Ontario Region has received an average of 19% of the funding from INAC and represent 22% of the status First Nation population, 20% of the on-reserve population. At this rate, the housing crisis will worsen. We will never be able to adequately address urgent needs. For example, Ontario requires \$2 billion to address the housing crisis on-reserve. The current national housing funding level of \$200 million per year, translates, at best, into \$50 million for the Ontario Region.

Without significant funding increases, such as aligning with regional population profiles, this crisis will continue, and will likely worsen. The Chiefs of Ontario are now working with the Ontario Region of Indigenous Services to correct this funding inequity as soon as possible. We hope to make significant progress in the months to come.

Regional Chief Isadore Day

Ontario

On February 14, 2018, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the government's intention to table an Indigenous Rights Framework and Legislation, to be passed before the October 2019 federal election. The current engagement process in Ontario consists of three hour-long regional meetings with various interest groups, along with the opportunity to provide email submissions. I have heard several criticisms and I look forward to receiving clear direction from the Chiefs-in-Assembly.

At the May 2018 AFN Special Chiefs Assembly on Legislation, Chiefs from across Canada passed resolutions to remind the federal government that we—the First Nation governments and citizens—must be fully engaged in developing legislation that impacts upon us. We must be fully engaged in face-to-face meetings with the Prime Minister and Cabinet. This has not happened.

Other pieces of federal legislation that will directly impact First Nation land rights include the environment, energy, and navigable waters. Again, this legislation requires deep consultation including complete co-development by First Nations.

On June 8th, the AFN National Working Group on Cannabis, chaired by Regional Chief Ghislain Picard and myself, met in Toronto. By the end of this summer, the federal government will implement legislation to legalize the sale of cannabis. Currently, there are no provisions in the legislation which address First Nation needs, from health and public safety, to youth education and economic development. The Joint Task Force has been working with the Senate of Canada to ensure amendments are introduced before Cannabis Bill C-45 becomes the law of the land.

At the May 3–4 Joint Gathering with the federal government's Indigenous Services – Ontario Region, our Chiefs re-iterated that the return of lands and resources is the most critical outstanding issue that must be addressed. There will be no social justice for First Nations, no positive future for our children, if

we do not have a sufficient land base to build happy, healthy sustainable communities. As the youth reminded us at the Joint Gathering—we are the land. The land means everything to us.

Our Chiefs and Grand Chiefs stated that far too many of our peoples are physically, spiritually, and mentally damaged by colonial dependency trickled down on postage stamp size pieces of land. Until we escape from the chains of dependency and the shackles of the *Indian Act*, we will never achieve social and economic equality.

Remember, there is strength in unity. We cannot—we must not—fall under a “divide and conquer” mentality, whether with governments, or amongst ourselves. We must never back down when colonial governments tell us to how to live our lives.

We must exercise our own jurisdiction within our own laws and protocols. We will continue to advance our Nations in order to secure a better future for our children.

Miigwetch!



Regional Chief Bill Erasmus

Northwest Territories

We welcome the new Chiefs and leaders who have been chosen to represent our people. For many, this will be your first Annual General Assembly. For others, this assembly is one of many. We have to learn from each other and progress further.

In the Northwest Territories (NWT), we have many pressing issues that are affecting us and I will highlight some of them here.

At the December Special Chiefs Assembly, federal Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould spoke of the fact that Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* is a full box of rights—meaning that First Nation rights are fully intact. They remain today the same as they were prior to contact because they are Inherent Rights. The Minister spoke of the need for First Nations to be clear on what it is they want. How will they govern themselves? How will the constitutional powers and authorities accomplish and support each other? Internal discussion in our First Nations must take place so our people are prepared to go to the table and clarify their position and rights to their territories and title.

We are pleased that Prime Minister Trudeau made it clear at the May 2018 Special Chiefs Assembly that the federal government will recognize First Nations rights and work with us to implement them. He said they will no longer use “extinguishment” as the basis for their negotiations when in self-government discussions with us. This is very important for our people who have been at negotiation tables for many years with little progress because of Canada’s insistence on extinguishing rights.

Canada must now provide funding and make available the possibilities to implement First Nations rights. This also means the existing treaties and agreements need to be fully implemented and First Nations don’t have to

wait for a self-government agreement to be in place to exercise their existing rights.

In the NWT we have been mandated to continue supporting a new fiscal relations arrangement with Canada. We have been instructed by our leadership to establish a Regional Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) based on the AFN-Canada MOU on fiscal relations established in 2016. We have specific issues and concerns that are unique to the NWT. For example, over the years the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has assumed authority from the federal government on programs and services to the Dene. The territorial government receives funding on behalf of the Dene for housing, education, infrastructure, economic development and so on. The territorial government decides how to spend the funding without the input of the Dene leadership. This MOU will clarify the priorities for financing and establish a new bilateral fiscal relationship with the Crown. It will also spell out how the GNWT will be involved with regards to financing First Nations. Part of the mandate is to meet with the Auditor General to have an audit of expenditures on transfer agreements for Dene programs and services to the GNWT.

We are also pleased that the federal government is reviewing outdated policies and legislation from previous governments. In our territory we have vast resources that have been sought after by big corporations and other governments. The Dene insist that they are the land owners and must have their own governments recognized. Devolution of authorities to the GNWT from the federal government must stop as it is part of the old way of doing business. We have requested the devolution agreement of 2014 be reviewed as part of this exercise. The devolution agreement was imposed on people in the NWT,

Regional Chief Bill Erasmus

Northwest Territories

especially the Dene and cannot be applicable while negotiations on self-government over much of the territory are still underway.

We have been engaged in new legislation that is being proposed at the federal level. This includes the regulatory process to amend the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, the National Energy Board, *Fisheries Act* and the *Navigable Waters Protection Act*. All of these amendments are related to First Nation lands and territories and it is important that we continue to participate and have our own authorities implemented.

The legislation to legalize cannabis is of great concern to the Dene communities. They feel it will add to the social problems that already exist and that there has not been enough discussion at the local level to comfort our people. The Dene leadership are asking for a two-year delay on implementing the legislation to provide more time to discuss and prepare for this big change that will affect us.

In the NWT, new legislation is coming forth associated with the *Mineral Resources Act* which implicates the *Northwest Territories Lands Act* and *Commissioner's Lands Act*. We are being vocal and bringing our comments forward to influence this legislation.

One of the big concerns that continues to be in the forefront is the survival of the caribou. The Dene have always relied on the caribou to sustain them. In recent years the caribou population has declined according to scientific government sources. Our Elders and hunters don't necessarily agree with this and insist that Dene traditional knowledge and expertise has to be acknowledged and recognized to determine the caribou populations. We are now beginning to work on a new long-term caribou management plan that includes the Dene along with the federal and territorial governments.

And finally, as announced, this is my final term as Dene National Chief and AFN Regional Chief for the NWT. Over the years I've been very fortunate to work with great leaders at all levels and great staff and technical people who helped get the work done. Thank you to all of you and I encourage you to continue working on making First Nations governance your priority. There is a delicate balance in Canada when it comes to implementing our Section 35 Treaty and Aboriginal Rights. We have to ensure that we make genuine progress each day.

We extend best wishes to the new leadership of the Dene Nation who will be selected at the 48th Dene National Assembly in West Point First Nation, Denendeh from August 20–24, 2018.



Regional Chief Morley Googoo

Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

Welcome to the AFN Annual General Assembly. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of the Chiefs and delegates to beautiful British Columbia. This past year has been a dynamic time for my regional office and the portfolios I'm honoured to hold.

There are a number of projects that have rolled out in our region over the past few months which have worked towards creating a New Narrative for Indigenous People. In our region we have hosted events like Grand-Pré, Legacy Room Launches and the Nimidiwin Indigenous Artist Showcase that have created positive movement towards reconciliation in building better relationships among Indigenous peoples and all Canadians. Our Regional Office is also working on coordinating our third Nova Scotia Federal Caucus – First Nations Summit and exploring increased Municipality-Indigenous Relations.

I have the pleasure to work on the following portfolios:

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC);
- Sports and Recreation;
- Language, Culture, Arts – Canada 150;
- AFN National Youth Council;
- AFN Management Committee.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

Truth & Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

The Regional Office will continue to advocate for meaningful action on the TRC Calls to Action from all levels of government. We are working to fully adopt the Principles of Reconciliation provided by the TRC and continue to work with AFN on the implementation of the Calls to Action. We have worked jointly with AFN to develop a report card and provide reports to Chiefs and partners on the implementation of the Calls to Action.

In addition to our national efforts, the Regional Office worked in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Tripartite Forum to host a Truth & Reconciliation Regional Symposium on September 13–14, 2017 in Membertou First Nation. We were honoured to have Senator Dan Christmas facilitate the symposium which brought federal, provincial and First Nation parties together to explore and collaborate on initiatives to implement the TRC Calls to Action in our region.

In Nova Scotia the AFN Regional Office played a key role in the removal of the Cornwallis Statue and the establishment of a Special Advisory Committee to address the Cornwallis Statue and Halifax Assets. This is a huge move towards reconciliation in Halifax and Nova Scotia.

Legacy Room Project: TRC

The Regional Office was instrumental in development of the Legacy Room initiative. In partnership with the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Initiative the concept of Legacy Rooms was created to support continued dialogue on the TRC recommendations. The Legacy Room Initiative provides an opportunity for schools, businesses, organizations and others in the corporate sector to answer Gord Downie's call to action for reconciliation, "Do Something." Legacy Rooms also answer the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 92.

Our Regional Office has focused on engaging a number of organizations and companies to create or designate areas, rooms and in some cases public spaces towards reconciliation in the name of Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack. We are pleased to say that we have launched several legacy rooms in our area. In Halifax, we have legacy rooms located at the Armbrae Academy, the

Regional Chief Morley Googoo

Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

Barrington Steak House and Oyster Bar, the library at Dalhousie University, Deloitte Atlantic Canada and the Waterfront Development Corp.

The Regional Office was instrumental in advocating for the Halifax Mayor and Council to pass a council motion to convert their boardroom into a legacy room. This is the first legacy room in Canada that will be located in a city hall. The legacy room will officially open in October in collaboration with the launch of Mi'kmaq History Month.

We have collaborated with Mike Downie, Fuse Media Style, Ulnoweeg, and Atlantic Regional Chiefs in launching these projects locally.

Canada C3-Expedition: TRC

Truth and Reconciliation is key component of all aspects of the Regional Office. The Regional Office worked with the Canada C3 Program, which was designed to engage millions of Canadians from across the country. The centrepiece was a 150-day sailing journey from Toronto to Victoria via the Northwest Passage to connect Canadians from coast to coast to coast. C3 was a transformative journey and aimed to inspire a deeper understanding and vision for Canada. The program worked to explore the four key themes of Canada 150: Diversity and Inclusion, Reconciliation, Youth Engagement and the Environment. We were pleased to announce that the project had a legacy room on board the C-3 vessel.

Grand-Pré: TRC

The Regional Office worked on the coordination of Grand-Pré 2017, which brought national exposure to the historic relationship between the Mi'kmaq and Acadian Cultures. We were amazed at the turnout for this event. We had approximately 35,000 people attend the event, even in the rain. The event was funded by federal and provincial governments along with community organizations and corporate sponsors. The event had national media attention and provided a great

platform to promote reconciliation among Indigenous peoples and Canadians alike. Grand-Pré included a cultural village, vendor marketplace, main stage with national and regional entertainers, and a powwow circle. The event was free to the public and brought national attention to the regional host communities of Glooscap, Annapolis Valley, Acadia and Bear River. This footprint will become a template for future cultural events produced by the Regional Chief's Office. This revelation of the relationship between the Mi'kmaq and Acadian people is unique and one that is shared historically. Our Region has embraced working with the Acadian community and this collaboration resulted in a tremendous reunion 400 years in the making. The event was held August 10–13, 2017 at the UNESCO world heritage site at Grand-Pré. This event was a massive success and the AFN Regional Office is in discussion to host another event at the Grand-Pré site.

Languages / Arts/ Culture

- Worked to increase investments in existing efforts and initiatives to revitalize Indigenous languages, including immersion programs.
- Worked with the AFN on the creation of National Action Plan to revitalize and promote Indigenous languages.
- Worked with AFN on the creation of the Indigenous Languages Act consistent with the principles in the TRC Calls to Action.
- Worked to establish a national Indigenous languages revitalization fund to support First Nation Languages revitalization initiatives.

Language is priority in our region and throughout Canada. Our Regional Office has worked with the Mi'kmaq Kina'matnewey (MK) to have immersion programs in Mi'kmaq. We now have immersion from headstart to high school in some First Nations in Nova Scotia. The Regional Office would like to congratulate Bear River First Nation and Chief Carol Potter on the grand opening of the K-2 School on October 26, 2017.

Regional Chief Morley Googoo

Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

The Regional Office also worked extensively with MK to develop a Mi'kmaq Language Conference that was held in Dundee. The gathering of Elders and youth was a very successful event. The program included keynote speakers, community exchanges and discussions, cultural learnings and Indigenous entertainment. The final report can be found on www.kinu.ca.

AFN Management Committee

I am a member of the AFN Management Committee which oversees the financial and human resources of the Assembly of First Nations. I have worked in collaboration with the Management Committee to help address the AFN deficit. The Management Committee has also worked on the management and modernization of the AFN governance practices.

Nation to Nation

The Regional Office has organized and chaired several meetings in the region to address development of a model for Nation to Nation governance and structuring the Mi'kmaq government while liaising with the federal government.

Nova Scotia Chiefs / MPs Summit

Our Regional Office hosted the first Nova Scotia Chiefs / MPs Summit in November of 2016. The follow-up summit was held in Grand-Pré, Nova Scotia on August 9, 2017 in conjunction with cultural events being held there on August 10–13, 2017. There were continued discussions on items tabled at the first summit with go-forward strategy discussions. The summit was the backdrop for knowledge exchange and sharing and setting the agenda for pressing issues facing Indigenous people in Nova Scotia. The Regional Office lead this initiative alongside MP Andy Filmore and MP Darrell Samson. The AFN Regional Office is currently working on the third summit.

Nova Scotia Tripartite Forum

The Nova Scotia Tripartite Forum has appointed me as executive chair for the Nova Scotia/Mi'kmaq/Canada Tripartite Forum. The AFN Regional Chief's Office continues to work collaboratively to improve communications and establish a commitment to make the structure more efficient and effective.

The Forum is comprised of the following committee levels – Executive, Officials, Steering and Working Committees. Each level has representation from each of the three parties: the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq, the Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada. All parties agree to work together without prejudice and by consensus to discuss and resolve issues of mutual concern.

Engaging Newfoundland

The Regional Office will continue to work to engage Newfoundland and to initiate work to coordinate a similar Chiefs/MPs Summit for Newfoundland.

AFN National Youth Council

I have the privilege to work with the AFN National Youth Council. My role on this portfolio is as follows:

- Promote youth issues nationally;
- Champion regional youth projects;
- Encourage and provide support for the AFN National Youth Council by building capacity and advocating for financial resources for the Council.

Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program Opportunity: Msit No'kmaq Tallship Project

Waterfront Development, in partnership with Sail Training International, worked collaboratively with the AFN Regional Office to recruit 45 participants, mentors/facilitators and to develop a program that provided Aboriginal youth from across Canada the opportunity to sail on board a tallship during the month of August

Regional Chief Morley Googoo

Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

2017. They departed from Halifax, Nova Scotia, aboard the Gulden Leeuw, and sailed to LeHavre, France. The group developed essential team building and leadership skills and shared cultural life experiences. The Indigenous youth also participated in a short film on the experience that will be available this winter.

Sports & Recreation

I hold the portfolio for Sport & Recreation as well. The Regional Office has worked on the following:

- Engaging First Nations, Federal and Provincial/Territorial governments, and partners in the preservation and promotion of traditional games;
- Championing for First Nations to have opportunities to access community fitness, sport and recreation programs;
- Engaging in IndigenACTION events and activities through the AFN.

Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Summer Games

The Mi'kmaq Summer Games were hosted in Wagmatcook First Nation in August 2017. The Games host over 1,500 athletes each year. These Games have been a tradition for the Mi'kmaw and support positive cultural identity for our youth and communities. The Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Summer Games will be hosted by Eskasoni First Nation in August 2018.

Nimidiwin Cultural Showcase

Nimidiwin: Celebrating our Dance from Coast to Coast to Coast was a showcase of Indigenous culture highlighting the many unique communities of Turtle Island in a spectacular New Year's Eve event at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec. This amazing event consisted of a series of video vignettes and live performances that brought the audience on a journey from coast to coast to coast. This artistic presentation of dance and music capped off with a fireworks spectacular set against the back drop of Parliament Hill.

North American Indigenous Games

The Regional Office supported the region and sent a delegation to the 2017 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG), the largest continental sporting and cultural gathering of Indigenous people, with more than 5,000 athletes, 2,000 volunteers and a number of spectators and dignitaries from across North America. The event was held July 16–23, 2017 in Toronto.

We are very proud to announce that the 2020 North American Indigenous Games will be hosted in Halifax. The AFN Regional Office is extremely excited to have the host city in the Nova Scotia region. I have been asked to be part of the NAIG Board of Directors for this event. Stay tuned for future updates.

National Indigenous Drum and Dance Canadian Championship

The Regional Office has been working to create a national production that will capture the beauty, diversity and cultural pride of Indigenous Nations in Canada. The first-ever National Indigenous Drum and Dance Canadian Championship will be a premier showcase that will captivate and entertain while educating all people on the various cultures and traditions of Indigenous peoples in our beautiful country of Canada.

The National Indigenous Drum and Dance Canadian Championship will not only be a premier event but a legacy piece for reconciliation as it brings tremendous pride, talent, awareness, and education to Indigenous peoples and Canadians of all ages, groups and backgrounds.

In Closing

While much remains to be done in coordination of the upcoming North American Indigenous Games and to make the National Indigenous Drum and Dance Canadian Championship a reality, I am so excited about

Regional Chief Morley Googoo

Nova Scotia and Newfoundland

the upcoming events to be held in our region and look forward to the year ahead.

Wel'lalin

In the spirit of Peace and Friendship,

Regional Chief Morley Googoo
Nova Scotia and Newfoundland





Regional Chief Kevin Hart

Manitoba

It is a great honour to present my annual report as Regional Chief for the Manitoba Region. A lot of progress has been made in many critical portfolios that I hold at the Assembly of First Nations. It is an honour to work with the National Chief, my fellow colleagues and respected Regional Chiefs at the Executive level, the Grand Chiefs, Chiefs and leadership from the Manitoba Region, the National Advisory Committee on Child Welfare, Chiefs Committees, staff and technicians. Without your advice, support, knowledge and expertise, we could not have accomplished what has been done so far. There is still much to do and with us all working in unity, nothing will stop us as we assert our sovereignty and take back our jurisdiction in many critical areas.

Child Welfare and Jordan's Principle

After the federal government held an emergency meeting on child welfare with Minister Jane Philpott and leadership from other Indigenous organizations, the clear message was that there is a critical need to address the issue of child welfare and Jordan's Principle.

The current Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) ruling does not require the provincial and territorial governments to comply with the CHRT ruling. This means that First Nations are working in their respective regions to address the need to overhaul child welfare legislation and jurisdiction issues utilizing traditional knowledge and practices, working within the current models in First Nations in the region that will remove the parent and keep the child home. Helping and supporting their relatives and members as they get the healing and supports out there.

There is much work ahead as the National Advisory Committee on First Nations Child and Family Services Program Reform will be working on a concept paper to look at replacing current child welfare models and legislation and Jordan's Principle issues, as well as utilizing best practices and knowledge from the respective regions. Many thanks go out to all the champions and allies in the fight for First Nations children in care and those deserving the proper supports under Jordan's Principle.

Housing

There is a lot to report regarding housing. As you know we have reached a critical point as First Nations people. The situation with First Nations housing and infrastructure is simply unacceptable and violates human rights. The Manitoba region faces the most needs, more than any other region in the country at this point in the history of our people. We are in desperate need of \$3.3 billion to address the needs of every single First Nation in the region to address 2018 needs today.

Our Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure has been working diligently to score important victories in regards to taking back the authority and jurisdiction for housing inspections, which were sourced by one entity to serve all First Nations. This clearly lacked proper engagement and consultation with the rights and title holders and the message was given to the federal government that this practice was wrong. As a result housing inspection services will now return back to the Regional/Tribal Council level resulting in much needed restored services, capacity and investment into the regions in the range of \$1.8 million on average to each region.

220 units are finally underway in the region to 22 First Nations that had critical housing needs, with a direct investment of \$85 million to the region and First Nations directly. There has been much needed capacity on the Social Development/Housing side – First Nations can start charging Shelter Allowance on all First Nations homes that have social clients residing in them. Under the old rules, you could only charge Shelter Allowance on section 95 homes under the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and you were not able to do so for other First Nation housing. This will bring in much needed resources and capacity for First Nations in regard to Housing as Operations & Maintenance models and policies do not take into account remoteness, north vs. south and other factors. This is a great victory that is 25 years in the making and there are many past leaders, technicians and such that need to be honoured and recognized for this as well.

The AFN National Housing & Infrastructure Forum was held in Montreal, Quebec last fall and was well attended by many Chiefs, and business, finance and housing leaders from across the country. A draw was held by one of the housing companies and a First Nation from the Manitoba Region was selected to receive a free home for their First Nation. Much dialogue, ideas and meetings were held; the AFN Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure met and are currently working on a Memorandum to Cabinet on Housing and Infrastructure. We want to take back the authority and jurisdiction when it comes to Housing and Infrastructure and look at new and innovative ways to build long-lasting and self-sufficient homes using green and clean energy for the ever changing climate and supply demands.

Water

The current *Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act* was done without consultation with First Nations and I have been given a mandate from our Chiefs-in-Assembly to ask for its repeal and work with First Nations on proper legislation that respects our rights

and listens to the knowledge keepers, Water Protectors and Grandmothers. This was the clear message that was received at our National Water Symposium in February 2018 that brought together Water Protector Autumn Peltier and Dr. David Suzuki. Water is a source of all life and needs to be protected and respected.

First Nations require much needed investments to address the current need and human right for proper drinking water. This has greatly affected our daily lives; simply to have clean drinking water is a dream in some of our First Nations. I will continue to work hard and remind Prime Minister Trudeau that he promised to end boil water advisories in all First Nations by 2021. We need to continue to work together to accomplish this great task. Investments in new infrastructure in First Nations with none and replacing old and aged out infrastructure has become the norm and reality facing many First Nations today. More needs to be done and I will continue to work hard in this area.

Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy / Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program

Long-term investments were advocated for and as a result added resources and capacity to the First Nation and Tribal Council levels will be available for them to administer and take over. As part of a new Nation to Nation relationship, funding cuts, no funding and lack of funding has resulted in gaps in First Nations in many critical areas. This added funding helps deliver supports and programs to train and support First Nation members.

Early Learning and Child Care

Under a newly created portfolio during my term, early learning and child care (ELCC) needed immediate investments and we brought the issues forward to the federal government. This past spring, the federal government responded by making a substantial investment in regard to ELCC that will again bring much needed resources and capacity to the First Nations level. For example these new investments

Regional Chief Kevin Hart

Manitoba

will be used to bring nursery programs in some First Nations from a half day to a full day. This helps keep working parents from worrying about critical child care needs in our communities.

As the summer season is upon us, I offer best wishes to your families, nations and territories in the summer and seasons ahead.

Yours in brotherhood,

Regional Chief Kevin T. Hart





Regional Chief Ghislain Picard

Quebec and Labrador

AFNQL Chiefs are confronted daily with the contrast between the progressive political discourse of the federal government and the reality of their relationship with this same government. Moreover, the provincial government of Quebec seems totally closed to any form of progress in its relationship with First Nations and continues to regularly violate First Nations title and Aboriginal and treaty rights.

The federal government and the government of the province of Quebec continue to discuss among themselves, without our involvement, issues that concern us directly and have serious implications for our people. Paternalism dies hard!

This is particularly true and deplorable when it comes to public safety.

Faced with a situation that continues to deteriorate, particularly with respect to police services, the AFNQL has multiplied its efforts over the past year: establishing a respectful and effective tripartite relationship with Canada and Quebec; demonstrating and having other governments recognize that First Nations police services are an essential service; ensuring First Nations police officers adequate conditions to exercise their profession; re-establishing police services in the communities that have been forced to put an end to this essential service, among others. We must admit that the results do not live up to the efforts made by the AFNQL Chiefs, with the constant and energetic support of the First Nations Chiefs of Police Committee.

In addition, relations between other police forces and First Nations members, particularly women and girls, remain of great concern to the AFNQL Chiefs.

Following a series of denunciations of unacceptable acts on the part of police officers of the Sûreté du Québec, the provincial government has finally decided to set up an Inquiry Commission, whose mandate goes beyond the strict question of police services and includes a certain number of public services provided by the province to the First Nations population. The AFNQL agreed to appear before this provincial commission and obtained its support on at least one aspect of the critical situation of police services.

Inspired and guided by the AFNQL's Council of Elected Women, our Assembly is currently working hard to set up a formal legal mechanism to which all complaints of police misconduct against First Nations people, particularly women and girls, would be referred. This requirement of the AFNQL is based on the observation of the current, totally inadequate treatment of this type of complaint. The investigative mechanism requested would necessarily include the active participation of First Nation members. The issue here, beyond security per se, is that of public confidence in the police forces and the justice system in general, which has been severely shaken as a result of unsatisfactory investigations and procedures over the past few years. This is a priority for the AFNQL and one that will remain so.

The AFNQL wished to significantly mark the anniversary of the *United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, so a major event was held in Montreal, in the presence, among others, of many representatives of civil society. Unfortunately, it must be noted that the many representations made by our Assembly to implement the *UN Declaration* have not succeeded in changing the very negative attitude of the Quebec provincial government toward this important international commitment. The province

continues to refuse to take into account First Nations title and Aboriginal and treaty rights, particularly in the management and use of land and its resources that have not been surrendered by First Nations. In the view of this government with its clearly colonialist behaviour, the implementation of the *UN Declaration* would be tantamount to recognizing a veto right to the First Nations and, from their point of view, this is out of the question. To this date, it has not been possible for the AFNQL to have a respectful and progressive relationship with the government of the province of Quebec, a situation that has had negative consequences on the socio-economic development of First Nations.

The Trudeau government's decision to legalize the use of cannabis has necessitated a number of initiatives on the part of the AFNQL. The draft legislation, both in Ottawa and in Quebec City, required many interventions on the part of our Assembly. In particular, the AFNQL Health and Social Services Commission accompanied our elected officials in their reflection on this matter with its many implications. The legalization of cannabis poses serious challenges for the Chiefs and Councils and will continue to be of great concern in the years to come as well as requiring their constant monitoring.

The passing of Bill S-3 by the federal Parliament has major consequences for the members of First Nations. The AFNQL has directly addressed Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to remind him that First Nations are the only ones entitled to define their membership and the criteria of their citizenship. Having placed itself in a difficult situation, the government chose to proceed and meet the conditions of the Quebec Superior Court in this case. The diverse positions of First Nations on this issue and the measures imposed by the federal government create a chaotic situation with major and long-term consequences.



Regional Chief Marlene Poitras

Alberta

Tansi and Greetings,

It is my pleasure to provide this submission to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) 2018 Annual Report.

Former Regional Chief Craig Makinaw was elected Chief of Ermineskin Cree Nation in August 2017, and assumed the position of Chief on October 1, 2017. Regional Chief Makinaw continued to serve the Chiefs of Alberta until a duly called bi-election.

I was honoured to be elected by the Treaty 6, 7 and 8 Chiefs (Alberta) as the first woman to hold the position of Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief for Alberta. The election was held in conjunction with the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs on Health hosted by the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations at the Marriott River Cree Resort and Casino, February 21–22, 2018.

I am a member of Mikisew Cree Nation and a direct descendant of Mikisew who signed adhesion to Treaty 8 in 1899. I have spent most of my career working with Indigenous communities, organizations, and individuals in several capacities across Canada and internationally. I was recently reappointed to the First Nations Women's Council on Economic Security. The Women's Council is an Advisory Group to the Government of Alberta. I am pleased to advise that I was also appointed as the Chairperson of the Council.

My inauguration ceremony for Regional Chief was held March 16, 2018 at the River Cree Resort, Enoch, Alberta. The event was made possible through the generosity of Chief Billy Morin, Enoch Cree Nation. Hosting the event was Chief Tony Alexis, Alexander Cree Nation. Chiefs, councillors and community members attended the event. A traditional ceremony was held, followed by comments by former Treaty 6

Chief Howard Mustus, former Treaty 7 Chief Vincent Yellowoldwoman, former Treaty 8 Chief Steve Courtoreille, Chief Allan Adam, Athabasca Chipewyan Chief Archie Waquan, Mikisew Cree and National Chief Perry Bellegarde. Drummers were on hand to provide honour and victory songs.

AFN Portfolios

My AFN portfolios were inherited from former Regional Chief Craig Makinaw and include the Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources (CCOLTR) and Emergency Management. I have been pleased to share the international Treaty portfolio with National Chief Bellegarde.

Chiefs Committee on Lands, Territories and Resources

I have been pleased to work with the Chiefs Committee as well as staff in the Lands, Territories and Resources Sector. Key policy areas for discussion include Additions to Reserves (ATR), Specific Claims and First Nations without reserves lands.

Former Regional Chief Makinaw attended the Chiefs Committee on Claims meeting on October 17, 2017. Agenda items included approval of Records of Decisions from the two previous meetings and discussion on the Chiefs Committee on Claims Terms of Reference specific to chair duties. The Chiefs Committee received an update on the work of the Joint Technical Working Group. They also had a discussion on Comprehensive Claims.

The Chiefs Committee continues in its efforts to improve the Additions to Reserve (ATR) policy. A Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) is currently examining

Regional Chief Marlene Poitras

Alberta

the specific claims process and developing joint recommendations for change. Engagement sessions were held in 2017 and the key theme is that Canada's ongoing management and control of the specific claims process constitutes a conflict of interest which can only be addressed through independent oversight.

Landless Bands has been an ongoing focus of AFN advocacy at the ATR JWG table. However, despite ongoing emphasis by the AFN, Canada has always been hesitant to have a substantive discussion on the issue.

The work continues with the Specific Claims JTWG towards a fully independent Specific Claims process as per Resolution 91/2017 (*Support for a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*), as well as with Canada at the National Advisory Committee on ATR to ensure the implementation of AFN Resolution 17/2016 (*Call on Canada to update the Additions to Reserve Policy*), and we will continue engaging with Canada on First Nations without reserve land issues with the goal of working with AFN regions to create a substantive policy development by 2018-19.

Emergency Management

Former Regional Chief Makinaw attended the Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management (SOREM) meeting to discuss emergency management (EM) issues in Indigenous communities, November 15, 2017, in Regina, Saskatchewan. The attendance of AFN at the previous meeting with Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers on May 25, 2017 in St. John's was integral to fostering a dialogue to strengthen the resilience of Indigenous communities across Canada. This meeting was a key step in a long-term effort to build a collaborative approach to strengthen Indigenous EM for communities across Canada. The November 15th meeting allowed for continued dialogue and to support partnerships between the AFN and FPT EM partners.

The former Regional Chief also participated in the National Roundtable on Flood Risk, held November 16, 2017 in Regina. The Roundtable is an opportunity for a diverse group of stakeholders to come together to explore opportunities to modernize our approach to managing flood risk in Canada. Two discussion papers were presented at that time: 1) *Informing and Engaging Canadians in Flood Risk Management*, which summarized best practices on raising public awareness of flood risk; and, 2) *Options for Improving Canadian Flood Risk Management*, which set out potential options for developing a financially sustainable approach for flood recovery in Canada.

Chiefs and Technical Committees

I have been reviewing the Chiefs and Technical Committee lists and reaching out to members to see how my office can assist in improving reporting and communication out to the Region on some very important policy areas.

Chief Billy Joe Laboucan has been appointed to the Chiefs Committee on Languages. Chief Craig Makinaw has been appointed to the Chiefs Committee on Climate Action and the Environment. Chief Brenda Kehewin-Vanguard has recently accepted an appointment to the Women's Council. Chief Lee Crowchild also recently accepted an appointment to the Chiefs Committee on Fiscal Relations. Chiefs have also been asked to consider an appointment to the Chiefs Committee on Nation-Building.

In terms of technical appointments, I have appointed Melody Lepine to the National Fisheries Committee and Ann Gladue-Buffalo to the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment as part of her role as Regional Climate Change Coordinator. I have also appointed Norma Large to the Chiefs Committee on Fiscal Relations.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Meetings with First Nations and Tribal Councils

Former Regional Chief Makinaw met with Chief Rupert Meneen, Tallcree Tribal Government and Grand Chief of the Treaty 8 First Nations (Alberta) and North Peace Tribal Council (NPTC) members during the NPTC Annual General Meeting held at the end of August in the First Nations community of Chateh, in northwest Alberta, and presented an AFN Report.

On March 8, 2018 I was invited to Alexander First Nation to meet with Yellowhead Tribal Council Chiefs. I provided an update on my activities and gave them a report. I received great feedback regarding communication. They were pleased to get written updates and encouraged me to meet with them frequently and to continue providing updates.

AFN Executive Committee Meeting

National Chief Bellegarde, who had called to congratulate me on my election also invited me to the March 1, 2018 Executive Committee meeting in Ottawa. Agenda items included a presentation and discussion on 2018-2019 operational budget; review of the 2017-2018 financial statements; expected new project proposals; and a review of the organizational chart. I provided Chiefs with a report and documentation following the meeting.

National Gathering of Elders

AFN Alberta had partnered with Chief Rupert Meneen, Tallcree Tribal Government, the Métis Nation of Alberta and Métis Settlements General Council in hosting the inaugural 2017 National Gathering of Elders. The event was held September 11-14, 2017 at the Edmonton Expo Centre in Edmonton, Alberta. The attendance exceeded everyone's expectations with over 5000 people registered. The 2017 National Gathering of Elders was the vision of Chief Rupert Meneen and is the culmination of 12 months of planning, spearheaded

by a National Gathering of Elders Advisory Council and a core group of organizers from Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 First Nations (Alberta), the Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Settlements General Council, Inuit Edmonton, and the Assembly of First Nations - Alberta.

The National Gathering of Elders is set to be a biennial event and Peguis First Nation in Manitoba is the site of the 2019 National Gathering of Elders. The current National Gathering of Elders website is being revamped. Once it is complete, organizers will post the summaries of discussions and will provide access to a gallery of photos and videos from the event.

Minister Bennett Meeting with Chiefs

I attended the meetings held by Minister Carolyn Bennett, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, with Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 Chiefs strictly as an observer. I did make comments that I respect the rights and authorities of the Chiefs and that AFN was not a rights holder. Our office and the AFN were not involved with the planning or reporting for this meeting. I made note of the Chiefs' concerns regarding the Rights and Recognition process, lack of transparency, and communication issues. Some Chiefs provided statements to the Minister and others requested the Minister to visit their communities directly to begin these discussions. A couple First Nations indicated they were prepared to begin negotiations. Many First Nations continue to express their concerns regarding the involvement of AFN in the process.

Aboriginal Peoples Senate - Meeting

I was invited to a meeting with the Aboriginal Peoples Senate Committee members on March 20, 2018 at the River Cree Resort. Senators asked Chiefs in attendance for their viewpoints on Nationhood and what that meant to them. My attendance was that of an observer and I acknowledged my role as an advocate. Chiefs and other leaders in attendance expressed their concerns with the Rights and Recognition Process. Chiefs expressed some concerns specific to their Nations. They also

Regional Chief Marlene Poitras

Alberta

reiterated that AFN was not a rights holder and could not represent their Nations at these tables.

AFN / Canada MOU on Joint Priorities Meeting

On March 28, 2018, I attended the AFN/Canada MOU meeting on Joint Priorities in Ottawa. Agenda items included 1) Progress on steps taken since November 20, 2018: discussion on budget 2018; co-development of the Indigenous Languages Act; 2) Forward planning on joint priorities: Closing the Gap – First Nations Child and Family Services, New Fiscal Relationship, and First Nations Housing; Policies – Specific Claims Policy and Additions to Reserves; 3) Legislation – Departmental split; Recognition and Implementation of Rights Framework – Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Comprehensive Claims Policy, Inherent Right to Self-Government Policy; and 4) Next Steps. Summary meeting notes were provided to Chiefs and Technicians in the Alberta Region.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Indigenous Women's Leadership Symposium

I will be co-hosting an Indigenous Women's Leadership Symposium in partnership with Chief Brenda Kehewin-Vanguard, Kehewin Cree Nation and Chief Bernice Martial, Cold Lake First Nation. The focus of the Symposium will be women in leadership, youth in leadership, women in climate leadership, traditional women's roles, and unravelling learnt behaviours. Opportunities will also be provided for women to learn about how to grow their own business, financial literacy, and how to be bold and take risks. The LGBTQ community will also be represented and provide information on their challenges as well as advice on how to be a better ally.

Strategic Planning Session

My office will be hosting Treaty 6, 7, 8 (Alberta) Strategic Planning Sessions June 25–27, 2018. First

and foremost, I recognize the sovereignty of each First Nation in the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs (AoTC), and recognize the Nations as true rights holders for Indigenous and Treaty rights. I have committed myself to working diligently to support Treaty discussion and dialogue, as well as advocacy efforts and critical campaigns as directed by the Chiefs in Treaty 6, 7, & 8, as well as individual First Nations. During the Strategic Planning Session we will focus on building unity, identifying priorities, protection of treaty, and improving communication. I am looking forward to working with the Chiefs to get a clear mandate.

National Indigenous Cultural Expo

The National Indigenous Cultural Expo (NICE) scheduled for September 28–29, 2018, in Edmonton, Alberta will combine a world-class powwow, Métis competitions and Inuit cultural and sport demonstrations is expected to attract over 10,000 people. NICE will be held in conjunction with a Symposium on Child and Family that builds on the Emergency Meeting on Child and Family Services called in January by Minister Jane Philpott. We join the organizers in welcoming our First Nations counterparts from across the country to what is sure to be a world-class event.

Conclusion

I am looking forward to meeting with the Chiefs-in-Assembly as well as my counterparts in the Assembly of First Nations at the Annual General Assembly, which will be focused on the election for National Chief. I wish all the candidates the best.

Hai Hai, ekosi

Regional Chief Marlene Poitras
Assembly of First Nations, Alberta



Regional Chief Terry Teegee

British Columbia

Welcome Chiefs, Leaders, Elders, Women, Youth, and community members to the AFN Annual General Assembly taking place on Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Territory in Vancouver, British Columbia.

I am from Takla Lake First Nation and am from the Lax Gibuu clan and I carry the hereditary name of Maxweem Tsimghee. I have been married for 13 years to my wife, Rena Zatorski and we have two children, our daughter Rylie and son Rowan. We live on the Lheidli T'enneh reserve, located 22 kilometers from the city of Prince George.

As the Regional Chief for the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) and on behalf of the BCAFN First Nations and Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to provide you with this regional report from BC.

Vision/Mandate

I have committed myself to work tirelessly for First Nations in BC, and have prioritized four areas of my mandate to include:

1. The BCAFN: Establish Relationships
2. Education: Securing our Future Generations
3. Economic Development
4. Children and Families Matter

1. The BCAFN: Establish Relationships

- Build stronger networks and lines of communication particularly with remote communities;
- Improve awareness, coordination and information sharing during emergency events such as forest fires and flooding;

- Create a collaborative, united front with the BC First Nations Leadership Council and Chiefs when advocating for policy and legislative change;
- Effectively promote and advocate for First Nations interests in discussions with all levels of government, creating the space for new agreements based on the recognition of our inherent title and rights.

2. Education: Securing our Future Generations

- Support community goals concerning education including access, management and authority both on and off-reserve;
- Assert First Nations control and establish authority over education funding and curriculum in Provincial public schools;
- Fight for the development of culturally-relevant and accurate curriculum to be used in all schools.

3. Economic Development

- Advocate for practical, on the ground revenue options for First Nations to sustain and grow their governance and operational needs;
- Leverage our First Nations rights and title position to insert ourselves into the softwood lumber negotiations between Canada and the US;
- Push Canada to recognize the Jay Treaty so we can freely trade with the US tribes;
- Support community priorities regarding natural resource management, planning and decisions.

4. Children and Families Matter - Families First!

- Pursue child welfare reform including sufficient resources to empower and build capacity for First Nations to research, codify and implement their own models of child and family welfare;
- Continue to support the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls by focusing on real solutions such as our successful campaign to get safe and affordable transportation along Highway 16.

At the recent BCAFN 14th Special Chiefs Meeting in Prince George, BC on March 8–9, 2018, 13 resolutions were passed that will inform the ongoing work and mandate for the BCAFN.

NUMBER	NAME
01/2018	SUPPORT FOR BC INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S DECLARATION
02/2018	RECOGNITION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF RIGHTS FORUM
03(a-g)/2018	OMNIBUS RESOLUTION TO ADOPT SEVEN RESOLUTIONS
03(a)/2018	SUPPORT FOR GITXSAN AND WET'SUWET'EN JURISDICTION OVER CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
03(b)/2018	SUPPORT FOR THE URBAN NATIVE YOUTH ASSOCIATION'S NEW NATIVE YOUTH CENTRE
03(c)/2018	SUPPORT FOR THE BC FISCAL REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT
03(d)/2018	NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS
03(e)/2018	ENGAGEMENT WITH THE BC CANNABIS LEGALIZATION AND REGULATION SECRETARIAT
03(f)/2018	BC WATER SUSTAINABILITY ACT CONSULTATION FRAMEWORK

03(g)/2018	CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR THE FIRST NATIONS MAJOR PROJECTS COALITION
04/2018	REFORMING THE BC <i>ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACT</i>
05/2018	CALL FOR ACTION TO ADDRESS HUU-AY-AHT PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY
06/2018	CALL TO PAUSE BC TREATY NEGOTIATIONS - WITHDRAWN
07/2018	DISSOLUTION OF BC TIMBER SALES CROWN CORPORATION

Proposed Federal Recognition and Implementation of Rights Legislative Framework

In BC, we have been working with our partner organizations (the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the First Nations Summit), First Nations Chiefs and leadership to solidify 18 Principles to inform our position with respect to the Proposed Federal Recognition and Implementation of Rights Legislative Framework (RIRF). On April 11–13, 2018, BCAFN jointly hosted with our partner organizations and provincial and federal governments, a province-wide forum which provided First Nations leadership a forum to discuss the shifting Crown commitments, priorities and principles of the RIRF. A summary of recommendations was developed from these discussions and further developed during an All Chiefs Meeting held on June 26, 2018.

Justice Portfolio

I am committed to engaging Federal Minister Ralph Goodale and Provincial Minister David Eby to advocate for a robust community-based justice framework and improved support for First Nations justice programs and services. Indigenous peoples are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and the BCAFN office is advocating for equitable access to safety, justice, and preventative services and support for First Nations peoples and communities.

Regional Chief Terry Teegee

British Columbia

With renewed commitment, the BCAFN office has been working collaboratively with the BC Aboriginal Justice Council to prioritize Indigenous issues such as family justice matters, Corrections and Child protection programs and services, and working towards the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) and the 94 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action across departments.

In BC, we recently co-hosted the Annual BC Justice Summit in May. This annual Summit was created in 2013 and provides an opportunity for discussions between justice and public safety leaders in BC. This Summit was a historic first of two in 2018; it was the first time that the Justice Summit focused on Indigenous Peoples and the Justice System in BC. The next Justice Summit will be held in fall 2018 and we expect a report detailing discussions to be forthcoming.

Fisheries

As co-chair alongside Regional Chief Roger Augustine on the National Fisheries Committee, we are working towards establishing a committed Fisheries policy Sector at AFN and a focused approach to the work based on our inherent Aboriginal and Treaty rights related to fishing, for Food, Social and Ceremonial, including commercial and economic fisheries. The NFC has been directed by AFN Resolution 76/2017 to establish a National Secretariat for the Negotiation and Implementation of the Supreme Court Decisions regarding Fisheries, which include but are not limited to the *Ahousaht*, *Delgamuukw*, *Gladstone*, *Haida*, *Marshall* and *Sparrow* cases.

On May 21st, the AFN and BCAFN acknowledged this day as the National Day of First Nations Fishing Rights. This day was established through AFN Resolution 75/2017 which is recognized to honour our rights to fish. The intent of the National Day of First Nations Fishing Rights is to raise awareness and reaffirm and exercise First Nations' inherent right to fish and manage our resources, which at the same time

raise awareness of our role and responsibilities in conservation and water protection.

We are currently planning a National Fisheries meeting, to be held in Vancouver, in the late fall; more details and information will be forthcoming.

Economic Development

Work remains underway in BC and will continue into 2018/19 with respect to our Sustainable Economic Development and Fiscal Relations Strategy. The BCAFN-BC Business Council *Champions Table* was established to advance economic reconciliation within BC and is comprised of key business and industry leaders in BC, and several First Nations leaders. The *Champions Table* recently met with Premier John Horgan and several Cabinet Ministers in April to discuss key priorities undertaken by the Champions Table.

Further to this strategy, the BCAFN has developed the "Black Books," which is a comprehensive Economic Development toolkit for First Nations in BC. The Black Books are comprised of four volumes: 1) a general economic development guide; 2) a guide for Chief and Council; 3) a guide for economic development officers/band managers; and, 4) a guide for individual entrepreneurs. We will also be organizing a First Nations Economic Development Forum and regional sessions to bring this information forward to First Nations in BC. For more updates and information, please visit our website at bcafn.ca or check out our new BCAFN app (iTunes, GooglePlay).

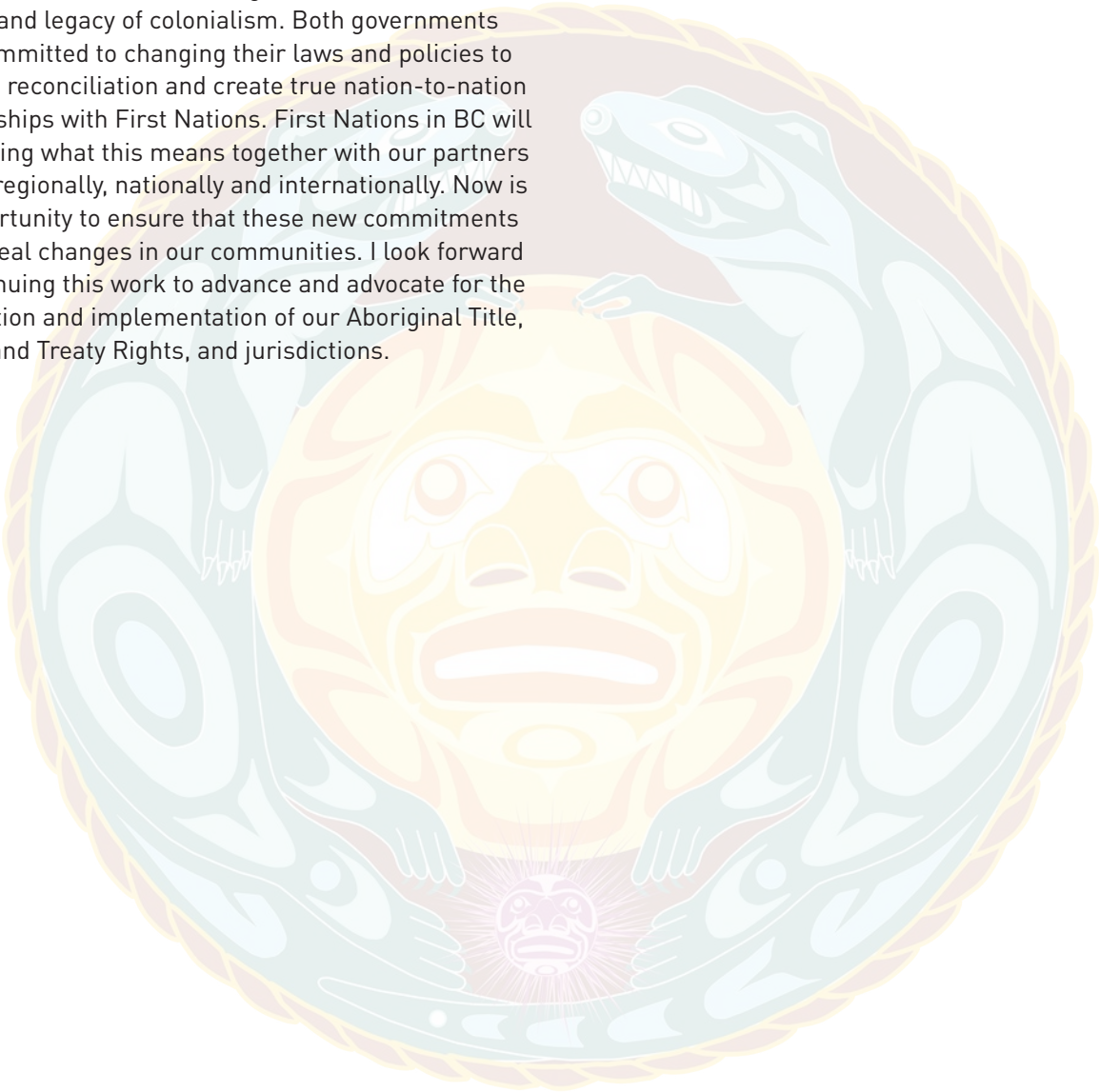
Conclusion

I look forward to working with First Nations leadership in advancing and implementing your Inherent Rights and Treaty Rights. We will use all the tools available to us including the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission 94 Calls to Action. It is important we continue to hold the Crown to their

Regional Chief Terry Teegee

British Columbia

commitments; the gaps between First Nations and other Canadians must be closed in our lifetime—we cannot leave our children and grandchildren with the burden and legacy of colonialism. Both governments have committed to changing their laws and policies to improve reconciliation and create true nation-to-nation partnerships with First Nations. First Nations in BC will be defining what this means together with our partners locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Now is an opportunity to ensure that these new commitments create real changes in our communities. I look forward to continuing this work to advance and advocate for the recognition and implementation of our Aboriginal Title, Rights and Treaty Rights, and jurisdictions.





Council Reports



AFN Council of Elders

Since the inception of the National Indian Brotherhood and transition to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), there has always been a place of honour and distinction for Elders that is evident within the Charter of the Assembly of First Nations. The AFN Council of Elders (Council) provided both spiritual and political guidance in the formation of the organization, its structures and its Charter. The Council helped to shape AFN policies and the relationship with the federal government and other national and international organizations. During the past 36 years, the AFN's leadership has relied upon the historical and cultural knowledge of the Council, especially in matters relating to Treaty rights and First Nations governance.

This role continues today. The Council includes representatives from each of AFN's 10 regions. The Council continues to play an important role in all facets of the AFN and its operations.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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

The Council is essential to our lives and our day-to-day business; they are the keepers of our traditions, values, languages and history. They are guides to our leadership and future leaders. They speak with honour and with a great deal of pride. The Council 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 responsibility to ensure prosperity and the safety of the little ones, just as our ancestors did for us.

The Council has made efforts to engage with other elders in their regions, to share information, and to communicate national messages to the grassroots. The Council has participated in the National Gathering of Elders that was held in Edmonton Alberta, September 2017. Members of the Council actively participated on several discussion panels throughout the three-day gathering, which included reconciliation, climate change, education and treaties. In regions across Canada, First Nations are revitalizing traditions and ceremonies through gatherings; the Council continues to advocate that First Nations traditions, languages, and ceremonies are shared and kept alive as it is the foundation to building stronger Nations.

AFN Elders Council Guidelines and Protocols

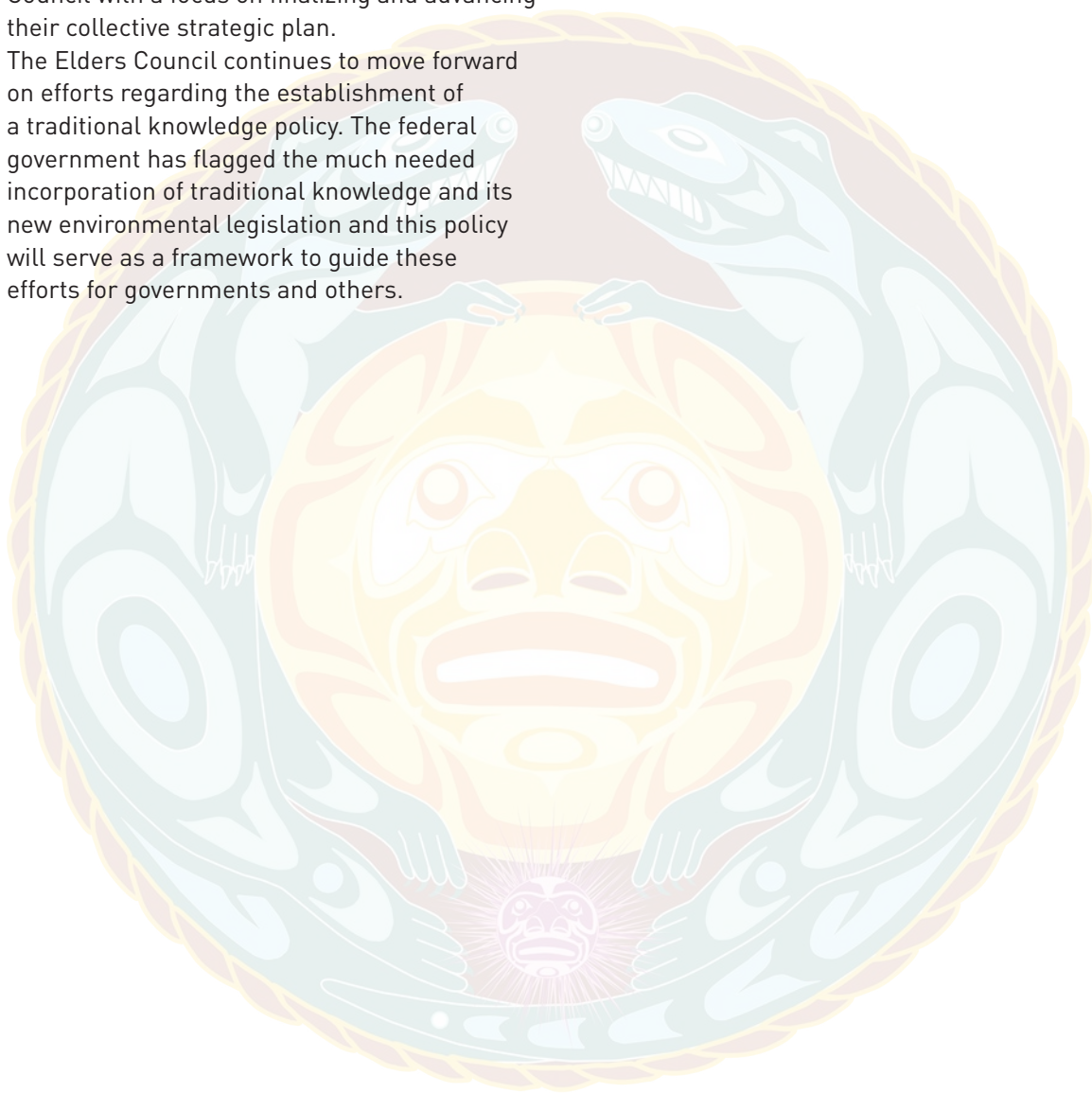
The Elders Council continues to meet at Assemblies to discuss and review and update the "Assembly of First Nations Elders and Elders Council Guidelines and Protocols".

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- The AFN will continue to seek additional funding for the Council from federal and alternative sources. The additional funding is to ensure First Nations cultures and perspectives are reflected in the work conducted regionally and nationally, and to fully integrate the input and participation of the Council into all work. AFN staff will continue to provide administrative support.
- The Council will continue to provide guidance to the AFN Executive Committee, staff and support the activities of the Tri-Council.
- The Council will continue to provide guidance and vision to AFN Tri-Council meetings with

the Women's and Youth Councils. The Council will continue their collaboration with the Tri-Council with a focus on finalizing and advancing their collective strategic plan.

- The Elders Council continues to move forward on efforts regarding the establishment of a traditional knowledge policy. The federal government has flagged the much needed incorporation of traditional knowledge and its new environmental legislation and this policy will serve as a framework to guide these efforts for governments and others.





AFN Women's Council

The Women's Council works with the AFN Secretariat to ensure that the concerns and perspectives of First Nations women inform the work of the AFN. Women's Council members hold portfolio responsibilities and participate in a wide range of panels, presentations and forums that are important to First Nations women.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Resolution 57/2017 – Support for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

During the 2017 AFN Annual General Assembly, the Women's Council supported the passage of Resolution 57/2017, which directed the AFN to:

- call upon the federal government to reset and change the mandate and process of the National Inquiry and if necessary, provide additional funding to the National Inquiry;
- to call upon the federal government and the Privy Council Office to remove any barriers that inhibit the ability of the National Inquiry to allocate funds and carry out its mandate;
- call upon the government to expand the scope of the National Inquiry's mandate to include policing practices and policies;
- call upon the government to fund family engagement, healing processes and support for families still at risk;
- call upon the National Inquiry to be less "legalistic" and less tied to Western legal processes and methods and to move away from top down, colonial approaches and include more local, culturally sensitive based processes, improve outreach to family members; and

- call upon the National Inquiry to develop and disclose its accountability framework, financial reports, how it is structured, and provide an interim report with an evaluation process.

Resolution 78/2017 – Support for the Extension of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

During the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly in December 2017 the Women's Council supported the passage of Resolution 78/2017, which directed the AFN to:

- Support the Commissioners of the National Inquiry into MMIWG request for an extension of their mandate and appropriate budget allocation for the continuation of the National Inquiry for a minimum of another two years, on the condition that the Commissioners make a formal commitment to fully implement prior to the extension and replacement of the Chief Commissioner, all of the calls for action contained in AFN Resolution 37/2014 (*Support for Families First*) and Resolution 57/2017 (*Support for the National Inquiry into MMIWG*);
- Call upon the federal government to reset the National Inquiry by replacing the Chief Commissioner, and reappoint the Chief Commissioner through a process with full engagement with Indigenous survivors and families of MMIWG;
- Call upon the federal government to ensure that hearings occur within the appropriate First Nation lands and territories so that it is further accessible to families; and
- Call upon the Commissioners to hold family hearings in locations recommended by the families of MMIWG and to adapt their process

so that it is safe and suitable to the traditions and languages of First Nations lands and territories to ensure connections to the lands are maintained.

On July 24, 2017 the Women's Council met with Minister Bennett from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and discussed priority issues including: safety and security of Indigenous women and girls; missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls; empowerment and economic security of First Nations women and girls; and various partnership and advocacy opportunities and priorities, as well as planning for upcoming Women's Council meetings.

The Women's Council participated in the Federal, Provincial and Territorial meeting of the Ministers of Status of Women held on November 9, 2017 in Ottawa. This marked the first time that the Ministers of Status of Women have invited the Women's Council to participate in this meeting and it provided an excellent opportunity for the Women's Council to discuss its priorities and explore building partnerships. The agenda for the meeting included discussions regarding First Nations, Inuit, and Métis priorities, violence against Indigenous women and girls and the National Inquiry's interim report, Canada's strategy to end gender-based violence and the National Indigenous Women's Summit (NIWS).

The Women's Council also participated in the Second North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls held on November 30, 2017 in Ottawa. The objective of the event is to move the discussion on eradicating violence against Indigenous women and girls.

In March 2018 the Women's Council participated in the 62nd session of the Commission on Status of Women at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, NY. The Commission on the Status of Women was a unique opportunity for countries from around the world to come together and discuss how to address key gender equality issues, including how to uphold the human rights of women and girls.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

The Women's Council will be holding a meeting during the summer of 2018 to discuss the implementation of its work plan, to identify key priority areas and to plan additional meetings.



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 but the council is inclusive to all genders and non-binary identities). This national body is a key organ of the AFN established in the Charter and represents First Nations youth across the country on issues that impact them on a daily basis. The AFN NYC provides insight to the AFN committees and working groups, as well as the AFN Secretariat on various youth-related and non-youth-related issues.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AFN NYC: “Calls to Action” on Life Promotion in First Nations Communities

As a result of the ongoing commitment to collaborate on the implementation of the “Calls to Action”, the AFN NYC met with the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) on April 30, 2018 to discuss next steps with regard to Minister Philpott’s commitment to funding First Nations and Inuit youth suicide prevention strategies at \$10 million over five years. FNIHB consulted the AFN NYC to receive feedback on how the dollars should be spent. FNIHB proposed creating an extension of the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (NAYSPS) program with a focus on youth leadership.

The proposed program would be proposal-based, providing youth with support services such as workshops to assist with proposal-writing. The criteria would be based on the “Calls to Action” and recommendations given by the AFN NYC. FNIHB envisioned youth and Elders as influencing the decision on who receives the grants. Micro-grants could be

available for individuals who want to apply but do not belong to an organization.

The AFN NYC expressed concern around accessibility as often times First Nations who most need the funding to start a project do not meet proposal requirements. Further, AFN NYC expressed their caution that the dollars for this program not be absorbed by larger organizations. While the AFN NYC is not a decision-making body, the main outcome from this discussion was to continue the conversation to participate on the steering committee to ensure the funds are reaching First Nations.

Youth Voice in Policy

On April 30, 2018, the AFN NYC met with representatives from the Youth Secretariat of the Privy Council’s Office to provide their input on a “Youth Voice in Policy” initiative that is currently underway. The AFN NYC reiterated that programs for First Nations youth need to be created by First Nations youth and rather than having a division within a general youth policy, First Nations should have their own “Youth Voice in Policy” program. The AFN NYC agreed to have more dialogue with the Youth Secretariat of the Privy Council’s Office to brainstorm best practices for ways in which First Nations Youth can engage in policy and programs.

On April 30, 2018, the AFN NYC met with Canada Service Corps to provide input on a program that is currently being developed for First Nations Youth. The NYC was asked to identify barriers and solutions faced by First Nations youth on reserve. Some of the priorities identified included education, housing and

infrastructure, parental involvement, mental wellness, overall health, substance abuse, language, and culture.

We Matter Forum

On January 21, 2018, approximately 70 Indigenous youth from across Canada, including members of the AFN NYC, gathered at Ottawa's Wabano Centre, ahead of a national roundtable discussion on the suicide crisis facing their communities. The two-day Hope Forum was hosted by We Matter, a national youth-led group that supports Indigenous youth in overcoming hardship and mental distress. The We Matter Campaign is a national multi-media campaign in which Indigenous role models and allies from across Canada share their own experiences of overcoming hardships, and communicating with Indigenous youth that despite feeling hopeless, there is always a way forward. The NYC members who attended met with Indigenous Services Minister Jane Philpott to share their thoughts on how to best support their communities.

AFN NYC Business

The AFN NYC met on April 29–30, 2018 for one of their bi-annual NYC meetings. On April 29, 2018, they reviewed their Terms of Reference and provided suggested changes to areas they saw fit. They also elected two interim Executive members, Ronald Gamblin and Rosalie Labilloy. The AFN NYC will finalize their internal reference documents at their team-building session before the 2018 Annual General Assembly.

AFN NYC – AFN Secretariat

The AFN NYC continues to participate on committees and working groups coordinated by the AFN Secretariat. This includes participation on the AFN National Advisory Committee on Child and Family Services and the AFN Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment, and the First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review in Education. Additionally, the AFN NYC participated at the AFN

Directors of Education National Forum, AFN Energy Forum and the AFN Emergency Management Forum. The AFN NYC participated on panels and in workshops offering their advice and input. Further, communications have been sent out to Directors and NYC members connecting them directly with regard to their respective portfolios to ensure that there is an open and transparent understanding of all ongoing activities taking place within the AFN secretariat.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- The AFN NYC will continue to collaborate with Minister Philpott and other key federal officials on the implementation of the “Calls to Action.”
- The AFN NYC will continue their collaboration with the AFN Elders and Women's Councils (Tri-Council) with a focus on finalizing and advancing their collective strategic plan.
- The AFN NYC will work to maintain a visible and substantial presence within the activities, meetings and conferences of the AFN Secretariat and its various sub-committees and working groups. Communications have been sent out connecting Directors with respective NYC portfolio holders, meet-and-greet teleconferences have taken place, and will continue to do so.
- The AFN NYC will hold their team-building retreat on July 21 and 22, 2018 in Squamish, British Columbia.
- The AFN NYC will hold their next meeting at the Annual General Assembly, July 23, 2018, where they will elect their new Executives and Co-Chairs.
- The 2018 AFN National Youth Summit is anticipated to take place in August 2018.
- The AFN NYC will discuss how they can engage in a partnership with Katimavik, as per Resolution 91/2016: *Support for a Partnership between Katimavik and the AFN National Youth Council.*



CEO Report



Chief Executive Officer

She:kon, Greetings!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 39th Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) being held at the Vancouver Convention Centre in Vancouver, British Columbia. This being an election year for the National Chief of the AFN, there is an air of excitement and plans are in place to accommodate higher numbers of Chiefs, proxies, councillors, and delegates in attendance at the AGA. The election will take place on July 25, 2018 and be overseen by the Chief Electoral Officer, Ms. Loretta J. Pete Lambert from Little Pine First Nation in Saskatchewan.

It is hard to believe that I have been in the position of Chief Executive Officer for the AFN for over a year now. I can say without a doubt that 2017-2018 has been a year of unprecedented change with a focus on reconciliation with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) 94 Calls to Action and a focus on a rights-based approach with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. For the first time the Federal Government is functioning in a collaborative manner across units within departments and across departments taking a "whole of government approach" at all levels at a very fast pace. The Federal Government is also changing how they work together with Indigenous Peoples and in a distinction-based approach with First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Co-development (working jointly with the Federal Government) is a new evolving way of changing policy, legislation, regulations, programs and funding across federal departments and systems of parliament.

The Chiefs-in-Assembly and the AFN Executive Committee are the decision-making bodies for the AFN. The National Chief and 10 Regional Chiefs make

up the Executive Committee and the Tri-Council Chairs (Elders, Women, and Youth) participate on the Executive Committee in an advisory capacity. The AFN Secretariat has evolved and now consists of 12 sectors. Reporting to the National Chief and the Executive Committee, the AFN Secretariat consists of the CEO Office and 12 Sectors including: Finance, IT/Records; Communications; Legal and Justice; Policy and Research; Economic; Education; Environment; Health; Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services; Languages; Social Development; and Lands, Territories and Resources. Each Sector is led by a Director and Sector staff work with related Chiefs Committees and Technical groups from each of AFN's 10 regions.

Having participated in eight AFN Executive Committee meetings this fiscal period, the National Chief and Regional Chiefs have actively engaged in meaningful discussions and provided positive leadership in moving national initiatives forward that are supported by resolutions from the AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly. A special meeting was conducted on March 1, 2018 whereby the National Chief and Executive Committee approved the Draft Workplan and Budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal period. AFN Secretariat staff have undertaken the work to advance these initiatives which include but are not limited to: Indigenous Languages; *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*; Child Welfare and Jordan's Principle; Fiscal Relations; Federal Laws and Policies; Closing the Socio-economic Gap; TRC 94 Calls to Action; AFN-Canada Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities; First Nations Policing and Public Safety; Specific Claims; Additions to Reserve; Health and Wellness; Housing; Safe Water; Emergency Services; First Nations Labour Market; Environment and Climate Change; Early Learning and Child Care; Cannabis; Gaming; Justice; AFN Charter Renewal; Modern

Treaties; and Nation Building. I am pleased to report that the AFN was able to completely pay off the existing deficit this fiscal period.

Progress in moving these initiatives forward has been made: the sector reports in this Annual Report highlight the many key accomplishments for the 2017-2018 fiscal period. You also are invited to visit the AFN website at www.afn.ca for more information about AFN. But we are not there yet. As First Nations begin to voice their views; begin to share their stories; begin to heal the brokenness caused by residential schools, the *Indian Act*, and colonialism; deep rooted change toward health and wellness will become the norm. It is an exciting time for all First Nations as genuine discussions begin on what First Nations want to become and how that may look.

It has been an honour to serve the Chiefs and First Nations of Canada. With the strong and committed leadership provided by the National Chief, Executive Committee, and Chiefs-in-Assembly, I have no doubt that we are on the right path to succeed. Working with such knowledgeable and dedicated staff, the AFN will continue to make a difference. *Working Together: Our Rights, Our Way, Our Future* is the theme for the AGA this year.

Enjoy your time at the AGA! Visit the trade show and network with others! I hope to see you there!

Nia:wen

Dr. Paulette Tremblay, Ph.D., ICD.D., CAPA



Sector Reports



Communications Sector

The AFN Communications Sector is mandated to ensure that all First Nations receive timely and relevant information on the AFN and international, national, provincial, regional and local issues, priorities, policies and decisions that can impact First Nations. The Sector is responsible for a number of organizational communications functions, including strategic communications planning, media and public relations, social media, public awareness, and producing and coordinating publications, videos and translation. The Sector provides communications support to all policy areas within the AFN and assists the National Chief's Office.

The Communications Sector distributes information in a wide variety of formats and delivery services including print, broadcast fax, video and audio messages, e-mail blasts, web-based content, Indigenous and non-Indigenous media and social media. The AFN also works with the IT Sector to ensure materials are provided to the AFN website and webmaster.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Media and Public Relations

The Communications Sector advises, prepares and implements strategic communications policy and planning for the AFN as a whole based on direction and mandates from First Nations, and strategies to advance specific initiatives, issues, gatherings and activities. The Sector works to develop materials and provide information to First Nations, governments, the media and general public about the AFN, its activities and positions, and the National Chief's agenda and priorities.

Press releases, media advisories and statements which are prepared and distributed nationally (in English and French) to Indigenous and non-Indigenous media, with regional distribution as applicable and international media where relevant. More than 100 press releases, statements and media advisories were prepared and distributed during the 2017-18 fiscal year. Communications also prepares media lines and talking points, backgrounders, op-eds, letters to the editor and editorials on current and priority issues.

The Sector assists in preparing speaking notes for the National Chief and AFN spokespersons for 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.

Communications seeks to raise and maintain the profile of First Nation peoples and priorities through a variety of media, including print, broadcast, social media and web-based media. The Communications Sector is active in media outreach and media relations and has set up background briefings, interviews and editorial boards to further understanding and awareness of the AFN's activities and First Nations issues.

The Communications Sector oversees daily media monitoring to track, assess and evaluate coverage of First Nations and Indigenous issues. Over the past year, there have been several developments that have resulted in widespread national and international media coverage for the AFN, including forging new relationships with governments, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, First Nations child health and welfare (including the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision and Jordan's Principle), Indigenous languages, the National Inquiry

into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, education, advocacy for a Papal apology for residential schools and renouncing the Doctrines of Discovery and Terra Nullius, a new approach to fiscal relations, health, housing and infrastructure, and resource development, among many others.

Public Awareness

The Communications Sector works to raise awareness and understanding of First Nation issues and the AFN's role, responsibilities and activities. The AFN recognizes that First Nations have different communications needs and different ways of accessing information. For this reason, the AFN uses a mix of traditional and new media to disseminate information as widely as possible, including broadcast fax, e-mail and e-mail blasts, the AFN website, and social media.

The AFN issues regular updates on National Chief and AFN activities and work underway at the national office. Communiqués are distributed by fax and e-mail to all First Nations, provincial/territorial organizations (PTOs) and tribal councils, and distributed via social media and web posting.

Since the last annual report, the AFN webmaster position was moved to the IT Sector where the IT Manager oversees website management and updates. Communications provides support for the AFN website (www.afn.ca) through regular updates to provide current information on AFN activities and priorities.

The AFN continues to provide live webcasting by in-house personnel of all Assemblies and key gatherings, some of which are interactive and accessible to the online audience. Webcasts over the past year include the Annual General Assembly (July 2017), Empowering First Nations and First Nation Persons with Disabilities (September 2017 and February 2018), National Chief remarks at the Families of Sisters in Spirit Vigil (October 2017), Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

(November 2017), and Special Chiefs Assemblies (December 2017 and May 2018).

The AFN hired a Communications Coordinator to focus on social media in spring 2018, and continues to expand its social media outreach including Twitter ([AFN_Updates](#)) with more than 42,400 followers and the AFN Facebook page ([Assembly of First Nations/Assemblée des Premières Nations](#)), which has more than 48,000 followers as of the end of June 2018. Videos are posted on social media, including the Assembly of First Nations [YouTube](#) channel which has more than 640 subscribers. The National Chief has his own Facebook page and Twitter account that are managed separately from the AFN accounts and are administered by the National Chief's Office.

Public information is also distributed to more than 1,750 subscribers through the AFN e-mail subscription service (listserv). Users can sign up on the AFN website.

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

Communications Strategies

The Communications Sector develops and implements global AFN communications strategies as well as targeted strategies and communications plans for specific events, issues and initiatives. The Sector provides advice, recommendations and communications support to the AFN Secretariat inclusive of all policy areas and to the National Chief's Office. Communications advice and recommendations are also provided to First Nations upon request whenever possible.

As of 2018, AFN Communications is engaging in public opinion research projects with Indigenous audiences

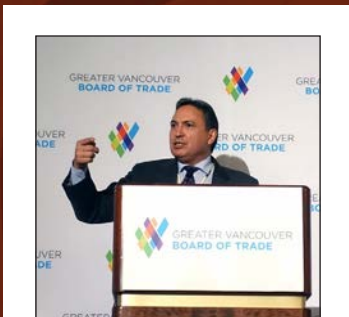
and non-Indigenous audiences. This research will inform all communications strategies.

Translation

The Communications Sector coordinates all French/English translation requirements to ensure that the general public and First Nations are able to access all public materials produced by the AFN in both French and English. As per AFN policy, all public documents (including those posted on the AFN website) are available in French and English. Translation in other languages is coordinated as required. Translation projects during the 2017-18 fiscal year totaled 642,399 words.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- Ongoing media and public relations efforts and initiatives.
- Publication of Bulletins and other public information materials.
- Increased and enhanced use of new media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and mobile applications.
- Enhanced monitoring of print, broadcast and social media using new analytics tools.
- Public opinion polling initiatives to inform strategic communications activities.
- Ongoing editing and desktop publishing of AFN publications.
- Ongoing French translation of public materials.
- Assistance in providing updates to the AFN website.
- Increased use of in-house webcasting and video production ability.



Economic Sector

The Economic Sector focuses on economic development, trade, revenue options, labour force and human resources development, agriculture and connectivity. This Sector also coordinates AFN efforts in regard to First Nations persons with disabilities. In the past several years, the Chiefs-in-Assembly have passed national resolutions on the importance of resource revenue sharing, new investments, e-community, procurement, inter-nation trade, agriculture, wealth creation and sustainability.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

First Nations and Energy Development

The opportunities and the regulation that accompany the development and transmission of energy resources are of great interest to First Nations. Natural resource development and the transition to a clean energy economy are critical components of Canada's economic prosperity and there are a number of First Nations interested and/or presently leveraging the benefits of resource development and green(er) energy.

AFN Resolution 55/2017 calls for the development of a First Nations Energy Strategy and calls on the Prime Minister and provincial and territorial Premiers to fully engage and meaningfully include First Nations in regional, national and international energy strategies and planning processes through the development of concrete mechanisms to ensure full and effective participation in the implementation of these processes.

In October 2017, the AFN hosted a one-day meeting to discuss First Nations perspectives and priorities on energy development that coincided with Natural Resource Canada's *Generation Energy* event. The meeting was an opportunity for First Nation energy

practitioners and leadership to discuss what aspects must be considered in First Nations' role in a low carbon economy; and with the added emphasis on the idea of developing and implementing a First Nations Energy Strategy. The conversation focused on the value of a long-term perspective and a major emphasis on the need to respect Aboriginal and treaty rights, information sharing, and the necessity of enhanced capacity support for First Nations when considering energy projects in Canada.

In support of this process, the AFN prepared a draft options paper that explores the substantive issues pertaining to the creation of a First Nations Energy Strategy for consideration of the AFN Chiefs Committee on Economic Development (CCED). The common themes and recommendations of the Sector's work related to the energy sector are pending validation and support of the CCED.

Trade Relations

The inherent right to trade and trade relations continues to be a priority for First Nations. Strategic considerations regarding First Nations trade relations must be based on the inherent right to trade within and between Nations. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* Article 20 (1) affirms that "Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems or institutions to be secure in their enjoyment of their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities" as guaranteed under Section 35 (1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

The AFN work on trade relations supports implementation of Chiefs-in-Assembly resolutions on

economic and trade development. These resolutions, including Resolution 36/2017, *First Nations Trade Relations*, and Resolution 104/2017, *Establishing a First Nations Advisory Committee under Section 6 of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act*, affirm First Nations' inherent right to trade and mandate efforts to advocate for First Nations economic growth and the development of options to secure greater economic independence.

In August 2017, National Chief Perry Bellegarde was invited to participate in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) Council. This provided an additional opportunity to advocate and to ensure a First Nations voice to ensure the respect of First Nations rights and consideration of First Nations interests. As part of the NAFTA Council, National Chief Bellegarde has pressed for the inclusion of an Indigenous Peoples Chapter in NAFTA and advocated for engagement with First Nations that aligns with the rights of First Nations under the Canadian *Constitution* and international laws.

Building on the work of the proposed inclusion of an Indigenous Peoples Chapter in NAFTA, Canada has introduced the concept of a Trade and Indigenous Peoples chapter at the Pacific Alliance Free Trade Agreement negotiations. The Pacific Alliance Free Trade Agreement is being negotiated with Colombia, Chile, Peru, Mexico, and associated members: Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. Canada has also entered into negotiations towards a comprehensive Canada-Mercosur Free Trade Agreement that could potentially include an Indigenous Peoples Chapter. There are additional considerations that must be part of the deliberations with respect to an Indigenous Peoples Chapter that are protective of Indigenous rights in both Canada and Mercosur states. Mercosur is a South American trading block composed of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

The AFN continues to receive guidance from the CCED on First Nations trade matters and continues to emphasize that the rights of Indigenous peoples must be respected and adopted as an essential component

of modern trade relations and that they are a necessary aspect of sustainable development. Proposed activity includes further dialogue on the development of a First Nations Trade Strategy with First Nations leaders and First Nations trade experts.

Agriculture

In July 2016, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 47/2016, *First Nations to Access Economic Opportunities Through a First Nations Agricultural Strategy*. This resolution mandated the AFN to engage with the Government of Canada and, specifically, the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). AAFC recognizes the importance of facilitating First Nations agricultural discussion, including creating greater First Nations participation within all aspects of the agriculture sector.

Throughout 2017, the AFN established a working relationship with AAFC to identify a path forward, for the development of a First Nations Agriculture Strategy. As directed by resolution, the AFN is examining methods for engaging with First Nations leadership and AAFC to collaborate on furthering this strategy. As a result, AAFC hosted two agriculture information sessions with First Nations to build awareness and a relationship among First Nations leadership and agricultural practitioners and AAFC. These one-day sessions were an opportunity for department officials and First Nations to meet and create dialogue on existing AAFC programs, supports and gaps that exist for First Nations within AAFC departments.

During the 2017 Annual General Assembly, the AFN held a First Nations Agriculture Strategy and Dialogue Session with Chiefs and technicians garnering direction towards the proposed development of a First Nations agriculture strategy. Feedback and recommendations received during the session provided direction in securing capacity to begin working towards developing information for regional working groups on agriculture. Key activities included a First Nations environmental scan and gathering information of the current

landscape of agriculture programs and services available for First Nations, both government and non-government supports.

Natural Resources Development

Former Acting Regional Chief Maureen Chapman participated in the 2017 Energy and Mines Ministers Conference (EMMC) on behalf of the AFN. During this event, the Regional Chief and other Indigenous delegates had an opportunity to speak with the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) ministers and share on First Nations natural resource priorities, including the need to support the development and implementation of a First Nations Energy Strategy and highlighting the concerns over Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanisms impacting Aboriginal and treaty rights. At the EMMC, the FPT ministers agreed to develop a Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan; to coordinate policy development around natural resources. The AFN is currently following the development of this plan and has proposed First Nations input to this FPT initiative.

In September 2017, the AFN and Chief Bill Williams of the Squamish Nation participated in the FPT Canadian Forest Ministers Forum with Minister Jim Carr, Natural Resources Canada and the FPT ministers. The forum was an opportunity to advance First Nation perspectives and interests on the current priorities of the forest sector.

A Working Group on Natural Resources Development (Working Group) was launched in December 2013 and their work came to a close in March 2015. The Working Group prepared a report titled, *First Nations and Natural Resource Development: Advancing Positive, Impactful Change* (March 2015). While the report was not intended as a final word on any of the subjects discussed, it aimed to provide a starting point for a more comprehensive dialogue. The report's thematic areas focused on governance, environment, prosperity, and finance.

First Ministers Meeting on the Economy

On October 3, 2017, National Chief Bellegarde and a delegation from the AFN met with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Premiers. Discussions included: resource revenue sharing and revenue sharing; policy changes for issuing permits or licences for major projects; revenue benefits; sharing; equity ownership; cannabis being an emerging element of the economy; urban reserves as zones for economic development; and the need for dialogue to address First Nations inherent rights, title and jurisdiction.

Human Resources Development

The Chiefs Committee on Human Resources Development (CCHRD), as mandated by Chiefs-in-Assembly through Resolution 32/2017, *Distinct First Nations Labour Market Strategy*, continues to provide leadership and direction toward a new distinct First Nations Labour Market Strategy (FNLMs). The CCHRD has influenced positive changes per this resolution – including additional resources and a 10-year labour market strategy. The CCHRD will be focused on more work related to this national resolution over the coming months.

The CCHRD has met twice with Minister Patty Hajdu, Employment, Workforce Development and Labour to express that First Nations have directed that a new approach for human capital development be centered on a government to government relationship that recognizes First Nations jurisdiction and authority to govern and provide services to their citizens wherever they reside. The establishment of a First Nations Labour Market Council and Secretariat was presented as a key element that would bridge the relationship and provide guidance and support for First Nations capacity and management. First Nations strongly agree that long-term fiscal transfer agreements replace the current year-to-year contribution agreements. There remains strong support for funding that is indexed

based on inflation and population increases that will ensure stability and allow for capacity and performance measurement. At these meetings Minister Hajdu acknowledged and agreed to the direction expressed by the CCHRD and to continue to work toward a transition that will achieve success.

The Government of Canada has acknowledged the importance of a distinctions-based approach that recognizes the unique needs of First Nations. Budget 2018 identified a First Nations stream that will provide \$1.1B over five years and \$235.7M ongoing to support a stronger focus on training for high-quality, better-paying jobs rather than rapid re-employment and allow for long-term career success.

The CCHRD communicated to Minister Hajdu that Budget 2018 is a good starting point on the investments that are needed, however, the funding does not take into consideration inflation and population increases, or support separate from the program funding for a First Nations Labour Market Council and capacity as recommended by First Nations. The AFN will need to consider Budget 2019-2020 requests.

In compliance with direction provided by AFN Resolution 32/2017, the AFN Economic Sector has organized Technical Working Groups comprised of current First Nations Labour Market Agreement holders and First Nation representatives. These working groups include: a Labour Market Council and Secretariat Working Group to review the planning, concept and role of a Labour Market Council and Secretariat to provide leadership and capacity; a Communications Working Group focused on ensuring information on the details is available on the proposed policy and governance approach in the transition to a new labour market structure; and, a Financial Model Working Group focused on developing a distribution methodology that is fair and equitable.

Planning is underway for a National First Nations Labour Market Forum to be convened in August 2018 to report on the progress made in the co-development and

implementation of the new framework requirements that will form the new distinct FNLMS.

The CCHRD continues to advocate that the Minister direct resources to support a new governance structure – a First Nations Labour Market Council and Secretariat outside of First Nations Labour Market program funds. The establishment of this Labour Market Council will be the bridge between First Nations Service Organizations and the Government of Canada replacing the role of Service Canada and developing needed capacity for the complete transfer of labour market program authority to First Nations.

Disabilities

The CCHRD provides guidance and support on the disability related work. The AFN has been raising awareness and gathering the views of First Nations persons with disabilities (FNPWD) and First Nations leadership, among others on the timely goal to define more fully what an inclusive and accessible First Nation might look like for FNPWD and First Nations governments.

The Government of Canada is undertaking an engagement process to move towards a Canadians with Disabilities Act, now referred to as Federal Accessibility Legislation. Some thematic areas include employment, procurement of goods and services, program and service delivery, transportation, the built environment, information, and communications and technology. This new Bill is expected to be introduced to the House of Commons in early summer 2018.

The AFN's work is guided by several Chiefs-in-Assembly resolutions on disability related matters. These include AFN Resolution 55/2016, *First Nation Federal Accessibility Legislation* which calls on the federal government to support a distinct First Nations engagement process; and AFN Resolution 105/2016, *Establish an Office of Disabilities Unit at the AFN*, which recommends dedicated policy supports and to develop a Regional Advisory Disability Task

Force. AFN Resolution 98/2017, *Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation*, reconfirms the much needed work, collaboration and investment. More recently, AFN Resolution 8/2018, *Resources for Engagement on Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation* was passed reiterating the need for regional capacity building, inclusion of American Sign Language as part of AFN future events, and establishing a Centre of Excellence to support promising practices, program resources, and data, among others.

AFN activities to gather the views of First Nations governments and FNPWD includes the development of a First Nations Discussion Guide, a legal background document, environmental scan and literature review, along with the completion of three national webinars, several surveys, reports, and key informant interviews. The AFN hosted a Strategy and Dialogue Session on Accessibility Legislation which was held during the Special Chiefs Assembly on May 2, 2018, in Gatineau, Quebec. The session invited First Nations Chiefs, FNPWD, federal officials, AFN regions and other delegates. The activities support dialogue on developing distinct First Nations accessibility legislation that meets the unique needs of FNPWD and First Nations governments. This is in addition to empowering FNPWD, First Nations governments, families, caregivers, program administrators, special needs educators, and others.

First Nations priorities and themes were identified during the engagement process. These priorities emphasized the growing incidence of disability for First Nations overall, and the need for improved data collection; respecting the right to self-determination and constitutional, inherent and treaty rights; affirming the government-to-government relationship; as well as the need to write our own history and to decolonize the legislative process. Cross-cutting themes were highlighted, such as housing, emergency preparedness, climate change, education, employment, Jordan's Principle, Non-Insured Health Benefits, and the protection of human rights, determinants of health, ensuring cultural safety, and a strengths-based

approach, among other topics. The AFN also heard the need to create space in its processes to hear directly from FNPWD, the importance of applying an intersectional lens to the distinct legislation process and the need to build capacity and to secure long-term sustainable resources as key to building distinct First Nations accessibility legislation and the empowerment of FNPWD and First Nations governments.

First Nations e-Community

The AFN CCED includes focus on First Nations connectivity and advocating 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 programs, services and investments in First Nations ICT. The First Nations e-Community Strategy is the basis of planning to help promote connectivity infrastructure, capacity and management broadly amongst First Nations communities. The portfolio remains an unfunded activity at the AFN and this has limited the activity in the portfolio as it relates to national discussions and strategic initiatives.

Poverty Action Research Project (PARP)

The AFN through the CCED has established a Make First Nations Poverty History Expert Advisory Committee. As part of its activity, the committee was successful in obtaining a five-year research grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health (IAPH) to support an intervention research initiative, the Poverty Action Research Project (PARP). The project brought together Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars from universities across Canada, and involved designing and implementing a strategic plan to help create a sustainable economic base and improve the health and well-being of the participant.

In partnership with the AFN, the project identified five volunteer First Nations in different regions of the country and in different stages of community

development and for the most part emerging or developmental economies. The project focused on the development and implementation of community development strategies directed to addressing fundamental (upstream) determinants of health and well-being.

The project is completed and a number of insights and key dimensions have been identified including: developing respectful and trusting relationships with First Nations in community development processes; First Nations goals for the community development process and strategies for realizing their vision; insights about the development model that recognizes the diversity of approaches for First Nations involved; the importance of community-determined steps, and builds relationships to access resources; the development model in context of work occurring in other countries; and insights about the lack of fit between policies of national granting agencies and university administrations and the requirements of community-based participatory research.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- Continue the dialogue among First Nations on responsible energy development as a building step to a First Nations energy strategy.
- Continue to work with First Nations leadership, technicians and ESDC on the communications and implementation strategy for a new First Nations labour market strategy for April 1, 2019.
- Continue advocacy for an Indigenous Peoples chapter in NAFTA and towards inclusion of Indigenous Chapters in future Free Trade Agreements.
- Pending confirmation of funding, seek the broader input of First Nations leaders and First Nations trade experts on a comprehensive trade strategy.
- Collaborate, where possible, with the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) on trade and revenue options.
- Secure next phase of funding with AAFC to continue on with existing work efforts from First Nations and the AFN.
- Coordinate with Regional Chiefs to identify First Nation participants for each regional working group on agriculture.
- Develop a draft Agriculture Strategy based on the recommendations and input received from regional working groups.
- Ongoing engagement with First Nations persons with disabilities and First Nations governments on distinct accessibility legislation, along with proposal developments to enhance engagement opportunities within First Nations and at the regional levels.
- Ongoing advocacy efforts to bring together intergovernmental/ interdepartmental agencies to work collaboratively in partnership to advance the disability agenda.
- Continue to advocate for long-term funding as part of the Federal Budget 2019-2020 to advance distinct accessibility legislation and capacity building for First Nations regions and for First Nations governments.
- Continue to advocate for First Nations connectivity priorities and seek opportunities to provide a First Nations perspective and policy input on federal connectivity related matters and discussions.
- Work to help build upon the results of the PARP to advance First Nations priorities towards the creation of a sustainable economic base, reducing poverty, and improving the health and well-being of First Nations citizens.
- Continue to focus on addressing data and information management gaps within the economic partnerships policy portfolio. Efforts to identify funding will continue for economic research and analysis on First Nations trade and investment, procurement approaches and improvements, investment tools, economic incentives and other areas that have been affected.
- Propose options for activity to Chiefs Committees providing guidance for the AFN portfolio.



Education Sector

The AFN Education Sector, Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) and the National Indian Education Council (NIEC) work and advocate to ensure the Government of Canada fulfills its obligation to recognize and affirm First Nations inherent and Treaty rights to education. First Nations Control of First Nations Education reflects our vision of a quality education for all First Nations students, including:

- Equitable, predictable and sustainable funding for First Nations education within a lifelong learning context;
- Quality of education based on First Nations-driven education systems;
- Transformative change reflective of regional diversities and priorities; and
- First Nations languages recognition and revitalization.

Federal Budget 2016 allocated \$2.6 billion over five years for improving primary and secondary education for First Nations children.

The AFN's joint work on education is guided by Resolution 16/2016, *Honourable Process to Develop Recommendations to Support First Nations Education Reform*. Five Joint Task Teams have been established comprised of members from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), AFN and First Nations regional representatives to honour existing regional perspectives, structures and processes. January 2018 marked one year since the Joint Task Teams took effect. This work is guided by the CCOE and supported by the NIEC.

The joint work and process resulted in the co-development of a policy proposal for a new funding approach to First Nations on-reserve education to support students, schools and communities.

On December 5, 2017, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 65/2017, *New Interim Funding Approach for First Nation Education*, which supported the First Nations co-developed policy proposal that was presented as the First Nations option as part of the ISC Memorandum to Cabinet on K-12 education. Co-development on the Treasury Board Submission is underway.

Federal Budget 2017 announced an additional \$90 million over two years to support post-secondary students and called for a comprehensive review with Indigenous partners of all current federal post-secondary programs. In July 2017, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 14/2017, *Post-Secondary Education Federal Review*, which would provide a First Nations report and/or submission, led by the CCOE and supported by the NIEC.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Supporting First Nations Education Transformation

The AFN Education Sector, CCOE and NIEC continue to inform the implementation of the First Nations co-developed policy proposal, per Resolution 65/2017, including supporting regions in establishing their Regional Technical Tables in order to work on the Interim Funding Formulas and move towards Regional Education Agreements.

Early Childhood Education

The Early Childhood Education joint task team works to identify the requirements needed to support and propose recommendations for early childhood education programming for First Nations schools and students. The team examines regional differences

and best practices regarding implementation of early childhood education and works to identify ways to improve access to quality early childhood education.

Statutory Funding

Federal legislation has been identified by governments, academics, educational professionals and First Nations leaders as a required instrument to support First Nations control of education. Specifically, legislation is required to direct the behaviour of the federal government and to ensure a statutory guarantee of education funding from the Government of Canada to First Nations. Statutory funding will ensure predictable and non-discretionary funds are provided for education. The Statutory Funding task team aims to identify options for additional protection for First Nation education funding.

Unique Needs of Northern and Remote Communities

This task team was created to provide an opportunity for northern, remote and rural communities to identify education priorities and provide recommendations for improvements in order to deliver quality education to First Nation students and communities. This task team also reviews and provides feedback to the other task teams, in order to ensure the perspectives, priorities and needs of northern, remote and rural First Nations are reflected in all areas of First Nations education.

Infrastructure

The Infrastructure task team was developed to identify the needs and deficiencies of educational infrastructure including capital, repairs, transportation, water, etc. The team will also review issues associated with education infrastructure and provide recommendations for improvements.

K-12 Expert Funding

The K-12 Expert Funding table will bring together First Nations education funding experts to share

information, discuss challenges and solutions, and review existing and future costing for K-12 education funding in order to support the regional processes associated with the Interim Funding Formula and the development of Regional Education Agreements.

Post-Secondary Education

The First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review took place between November 2017 and July 2018. The review group met for a total of nine days to evaluate current federal post-secondary education policy and make recommendations as part of a final report to be submitted to Indigenous Services Canada. The review included the evaluation of appropriate supports for First Nations students as well as supports for First Nations Institutes of Higher Learning. The report and recommendations will be brought to the Chiefs-in-Assembly at the AFN Annual General Assembly in July 2018.

Education Forum

The First Nations Directors of Education Forum held February 20–22, 2018 in Gatineau, Quebec brought together 600 participants from across Canada. The theme of the forum was *Honouring our Tradition, Soaring to our Potential*.

Directors of Education Association

In July 2017, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 15/2017 which called for the outlining of next steps required in creating a First Nations Directors of Education Association and seeking funding to establish an organizational structure. Funding was subsequently secured and next steps will begin in 2018-2019.

Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council (AFN NYC)

The AFN NYC will now be housed in the Education Sector. The AFN NYC will work to maintain a visible and substantial presence within the activities, meetings and

conferences of the AFN Secretariat and its various sub-committees and working groups.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

Supporting First Nations Education Transformation

- First Nations are co-drafting the terms and conditions of the Treasury Board submission required to accompany a Memorandum to Cabinet.
- The CCOE and NIEC continue to inform the implementation of First Nations education transformation and the transition to the Interim Funding Formula and Regional Education Agreements.

Early Childhood Education

- The joint task team will complete and publish a research paper on implementing full-time Kindergarten for 4 and 5 year olds, barriers, and strengths.
- The joint task team will develop a national framework that fully accommodates regional approaches but examine regional differences and best practices regarding the implementation of quality Early Childhood Education in First Nations schools.

Statutory Funding

- The joint task team will continue analyzing legislation and non-legislative education funding options to understand which would best meet the fiscal principles that support the First Nation education vision.
- In the short-term the joint task team will focus on the interim funding formula and create a methodology for updating the mechanism annually.

Unique Needs of Northern and Remote Communities

- The joint task team will complete and publish Remoteness Indicators research and a summary document with recommendations for addressing remoteness in education funding formulas.
- The long-term 2018-2019 project is to identify best practices on recruitment and retention of teachers in remote First Nations and develop a summary report.

Infrastructure

- The task team met for the first time May 3–4, 2018 to develop operational terms and a work plan.
- The team will work closely with the broader joint First Nations-ISC Infrastructure to identify First Nations education specific needs.

K-12 Expert Funding

- The task team met for the first time June 13–14, 2018 and will share information and best practices and discuss how to support the development of First Nations education funding formulas through Regional Education Agreements.

Post-Secondary Education

- The First Nations Post-Secondary Education Review Report will be presented to the Chiefs-in-Assembly via resolution to seek direction on continued advocacy for First Nations Post-Secondary Education.

Education Forum

- The AFN Education Sector has begun planning for the 2019 First Nations Directors of Education National Forum which will be held February 12–14, 2019 in Halifax at the Halifax Convention Centre. The theme for the 2019 National Forum will be *Embracing Our Voice through Holistic Education* with a pre-conference day on Treaty Education.

Directors of Education Association

- 2018-2019 will see the initial stages of the creation of a First Nations Directors of Education Association.

Assembly of First Nations National Youth Council (AFN NYC)

- The AFN NYC will hold a team-building retreat on July 21–22 2018, in Squamish, British Columbia and their next formal meeting July 23, 2018 in Vancouver.
- The 2018 AFN National Youth Summit is anticipated to take place in August 2018.
- The AFN NYC will discuss how they can engage in a partnership with Katimavik, as per Resolution 91/2016, *Support for a Partnership between Katimavik and the AFN National Youth Council*.



Environment (and Fisheries) Sector

The Environment Sector focuses on all environmentally-based issues affecting First Nations, including fisheries. Environment staff work directly with two Chiefs Committees: (1) the Advisory Committee on Climate Action and the Environment (ACE) and (2) the National Fisheries Committee (NFC). Mandated by a wide array of resolutions, the Environment Sector is active on a range of key environmental and fisheries issues, while also maintaining a broad focus on other issues that evolve from year to year. This year also marks the beginning of a transition for the Environment Sector that will see Fisheries become a stand-alone entity at AFN – this transition is expected to take shape over the summer/fall of 2018 so that a fully independent AFN Fisheries Sector is in operation by 2019. This transition will take place in coordination with the NFC.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Climate Change

With the support of the ACE, the Environment Sector has participated in Canada's Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Action (PCF) process, which commenced in 2016 and led to the establishment of a bilateral First Nation/Canada technical table on climate change: the Joint Committee on Climate Action (JCCA). In October 2017, senior federal officials met with First Nation technical representatives from across Canada for the inaugural meeting of the JCCA. Since then, the JCCA has discussed a variety of issues and has struck two working groups – on “carbon pricing” and on “accessibility of funding” – to advance these issues on a priority basis.

In addition, the ACE has been working with the AFN Elders Council to support discussions focused on

the treatment of Indigenous Knowledge, with a view to developing an Indigenous Knowledge Systems framework. This was discussed most recently at an Elders Forum hosted by the ACE in London, Ontario, in February 2018. The Environment Sector has also provided funding to enable each region to hire a Regional Climate Change Coordinator to better coordinate climate information sharing and action with First Nations. A National Climate Change Coordinator is now also in place to support this work.

Environmental and Regulatory Reviews

In 2016, the Government of Canada announced the review of key environmental legislation, including the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA), the modernization of the National Energy Board (NEB), the *Navigation Protection Act* (NPA), and the *Fisheries Act*. In February 2018, the federal government introduced a bill to amend or replace three of these acts as part of Bill C-69: *An Act to enact the Impact Assessment Act and the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, to amend the Navigation Protection Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts* (Bill C-68 amended the *Fisheries Act*, see below).

The Environment Sector, with guidance from the ACE and the Chiefs-in-Assembly, has been very active on this file and several resolutions were passed in recent years reflecting First Nations' interests with respect to this issue, most recently Resolution 07/ 2018 – *Addressing First Nations Rights, Title, and Jurisdiction in Bill C-69: Impact Assessment Act, Canadian Energy Regulator Act, and the Navigation Protection Act*. The Environment Sector has facilitated a variety of information sessions and technical meetings across the country for all of these Reviews in an effort to support First Nations in their direct engagement with the Crown.

Sector Reports // Environment (and Fisheries)

Species at Risk

The *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) was jointly developed with First Nations in the 1990s to prevent wildlife from becoming extinct and to determine actions for their recovery, in accordance with Canada's international commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The SARA was also the only piece of federal legislation that explicitly recognized the critical role of Indigenous Peoples in its administration and implementation, and did so through the establishment of the National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk (NACOSAR), an advisory committee to the Minister. In 2017, the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change agreed to establish a First Nations-specific technical advisory body: the First Nations Advisory Committee on Species at Risk (FNACSAR). The FNACSAR has now met on three occasions to focus on strategic planning and priority identification with First Nations. Its mandate includes First Nations' technical representation from across the Canada. The ACE provides ongoing oversight to support engagement on Species at Risk issues.

Pathway to Target 1

Canada established the Pathway to Target 1 initiative based on an international commitment arising from the Convention on Biological Diversity. This target calls for the conservation of 17 per cent of terrestrial areas and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas by 2020 through the establishment of networks of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, including Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs). Canada has worked to engage First Nations through a variety of mechanisms and with the direct participation of First Nations representatives at all levels, including throughout its administrative structures and through the creation of an Indigenous Circle of Experts (ICE). In March 2018, the ICE presented its final report and recommendations to the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change. The overall Pathway Report arising from this process will be presented to federal, provincial and

territorial Ministers responsible for Conservation, Wildlife and Biodiversity in late-June 2018. The process is expected to continue through 2018, to 2020 and beyond.

National Day of First Nations Fishing Rights

First Nations from across Canada marked May 21, 2018, as the inaugural National Day of First Nations Fishing Rights. The day was established through Resolution 75/2017 – *National Day of First Nations Fishing Rights*, dedicating the first Monday preceding May 25 ("Victoria Day"), to be recognized to honour First Nations rights to fish. The AFN developed a communications plan launched through social media as the marker of an annual campaign in the spirit of reconciliation and the continued education and exercise of First Nations rights.

Bill C-68 Amendments to the Fisheries Act

In 2016, the Government of Canada announced the review of key environmental legislation, including amending the *Fisheries Act* (see Environmental and Regulatory Reviews, above). In February 2018, the Government of Canada introduced Bill C-68 into the House of Commons to amend the *Fisheries Act*. The Environment Sector, with guidance from the NFC and the Chiefs-in-Assembly, has been very active on this file and several resolutions were passed over the past two years reflecting First Nations' interests with respect to this issue, most recently Resolution 04/2018 – *First Nations Role in Changes to the Fisheries Act*. The Environment Sector has facilitated a variety of information sessions and technical meetings across the country to support First Nations in their direct engagement with the Crown.

National Aquaculture Working Group

In 2017, the National Aquaculture Working Group (NAWG) was re-established as a technical working group under the NFC to engage on the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada aquaculture policies.

The NAWG consists of regional technical experts and its current body of work is mandated by Resolution 33/2017 – *Aquaculture legislative and policy reviews*. The aquaculture industry in Canada consists of salt and freshwater finfish, shellfish, and marine algae cultivation. Each combination of species and environments presents unique considerations for regulation, policy, management, science, technical, and legal analysis. These unique considerations coupled with multiple levels of governments and multiple departments involved in the regulatory framework create high levels of complexity in this area.

National Policy Analysis Working Group – Inland Fisheries

The National Policy Analysis Working Group (NPAG) is comprised of technical representatives to address fisheries policy development that impacts First Nations. In 2018, the National Chief advised the NFC to examine inland and freshwater fisheries challenges by convening a meeting to initiate a new Inland Fisheries sub-committee of the NFC. To address this direction, the NPAG hosted a special meeting of NFC members, inland fisheries experts and technicians, to discuss long-standing issues impacting inland and freshwater First Nations fisheries.

Oceans Working Group

Earlier this year, the first meeting of the AFN Oceans Working Group was held in Montreal, Quebec. This meeting was part of an information exchange on Bill C-55, the *Oceans Act*, related off-shore oil & gas regulations, and federal oceans management in general. The Oceans Working Group looks at issues faced by First Nations concerning Canada's action plan to create additional Marine Protected Areas (MPA) that meet its international commitments to oceans conservation (see Pathway to Target 1, above).

Marine Emergency Response Protocol

Ongoing spill issues and marine emergencies have elevated the importance of the Marine Emergency Response Protocol (MERP), originally drafted in 2006, to deal specifically with marine emergencies such as conflicts on the water, rescue, oil spills, and disaster relief that can impact First Nation fisheries. It is anticipated that there will be an opportunity in the near future for a formal signing related to reopening the MERP.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- Ongoing advancement of climate-related issues in coordination with the ACE, the JCCA, and Regional Climate Change Coordinators.
- Ongoing advocacy relating to the four Environmental and Regulatory Reviews currently underway (C-68 and C-69).
- Implementation of a stand-alone Fisheries Sector at AFN to better support and advocate for First Nations' fishing rights nationally.
- Hosting of an AFN National Indigenous Fisheries Forum (NIFF) to be held by early 2019.



Health Sector

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Health Sector is mandated to protect, maintain, promote, support, and advocate for First Nations inherent, Treaty, and international legal rights towards ensuring the holistic health and the well-being of First Nations. This is achieved through policy analysis, communications, and most importantly, advocacy on behalf of, and supporting First Nations communities and individuals. A central goal of the AFN Health Sector team is First Nations' control of the development and delivery of all health services and programs.

Details on a number of areas of high priority for 2017/18 in health can be found below. These are Mental Wellness and Substance Use, Non-Insured Health Benefits, and advancing the First Nations Health Transformation Agenda, which sets the AFN's advocacy agenda on health. Beyond these priority issues, other areas of work undertaken by the AFN Health Sector team include public health, chronic and communicable diseases, cannabis, food security/sovereignty, emergency management and pandemic planning, tobacco, health data, children's health, midwifery and reproductive health, home and community care and palliative care, injury prevention, and health partnerships, among others. More information on these areas of work can be found on the AFN health website at: www.health.afn.ca.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

STRATEGIC POLICY: FIRST NATIONS HEALTH TRANSFORMATION AGENDA

In 2017/18 the AFN continued to pursue a long-term vision of First Nations control of First Nations health systems with sustainable and adequate investments that result in better health outcomes.

Developed in 2016/17 as the AFN's submission to the potential Health Accord negotiations, the *First Nations Health Transformation Agenda* (FNHTA) involved input and advice from the Chiefs Committee on Health (CCOH), the National First Nations Health Technicians Network (NFNHTN), a dedicated Task Team made up of subject matter experts, the AFN Elders Council, health economists, and experts in Aboriginal law.

Overall, the FNHTA includes 85 recommendations for Federal-Provincial-Territorial governments across a wide spectrum of priority policy areas. Perhaps more important than the specific policy recommendations, is the overarching messages of the FNHTA. They are as follows:

- **Getting the Relationships Right** – for all of those within the healthcare world, but in particular federal, provincial and territorial governments, to work with First Nations in a way which respects First Nations right to self-determination, as part of Treaty, inherent and international rights. The FNHTA seeks to push federal/provincial/territorial actors to engage with First Nations rights-holders in building these vital relationships.
- **Meaningful Investments in First Nations Health** – speaks to the need for significant and immediate investments in program areas across the board. First Nations health systems are profoundly underfunded, a fact which contributes significantly to the overall poor health outcomes of First Nations people.
- **Support First Nations Capacity First** – speaks to the need to support First Nations people, governments, and organizations in building capacity in the area of health and wellness, rather than turning to mainstream

organizations to do work on behalf of First Nations. First Nations have the right and the knowledge to develop our own healthcare and health systems solutions. The missing link continues to be capacity support.

While a federal/provincial/territorial Health Accord was never realized, the AFN continues to advocate for the implementation of the FNHTA to achieve real transformative change in First Nations health, at all levels and to all audiences.

With this goal in mind, the AFN hosted the First Nations Health Transformation Summit on February 13–14, 2018 in Toronto, Ontario. The Summit theme, *Getting the Relationships Right: Health Governance in the Era of Reconciliation*, was designed to facilitate relationship building and to amplify innovative First Nations-built health programs, services and systems from across the country that have found success in overcoming jurisdictional gaps. It was also an opportunity for First Nations, the federal government, and provinces/territories to come together to develop shared priorities. Approximately 450 people were in attendance.

Related to transformation and responding to Resolution 04/2017 (*Maximizing the Reach and Responsiveness of the AFN Health Sector*), the AFN Health Sector is nearing completion of an organizational review and updated strategic plan which will align Sector work with the current needs and priorities of First Nations given the emerging models in First Nations health systems.

NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS

The Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program provides coverage for registered Indians and recognized Inuit on a limited range of medically necessary health-related goods and services that include pharmaceuticals (i.e., prescription and over the counter drugs), medical supplies/equipment, vision care, dental services, medical transportation and mental health

crisis counselling. The NIHB program is consistently identified as an irritant for First Nations and a high priority area for AFN advocacy and transformation. The AFN continues to make progress in addressing Resolution 56/2012 (*Moratorium & Joint Review of Non-Insured Health Benefits*), which called for a moratorium on cuts to the NIHB program until such time as the AFN and FNIHB can conduct a joint review of NIHB in order to articulate shortcomings and identify potential efficiencies.

AFN work on NIHB has centered on the AFN-FNIHB NIHB Joint Review, called for in Resolution 56/2012. The established objectives of the Joint Review are to enhance client access to benefits, identify and address gaps in benefits, streamlining service delivery to be more responsive to client needs, and increasing program efficiencies. The Joint Review began in earnest in September of 2014 and is guided by the Joint Review Steering Committee (JRSC), made up of equal representation of First Nations and FNIHB staff including two Indigenous Services Canada Deputy Ministers.

To date, the JRSC has fully reviewed three benefit areas, the Mental Health Crisis Counselling Intervention Benefit (2016), Vision Benefit and Dental Benefit (2018). Recommendations and implementation plans were developed and endorsed by the JRSC. Some of the recommendations identified in the Mental Health Crisis review were achieved through Budget 2017, including new funding for Traditional Healers and Elders. The work to inform the review of the remaining benefit areas is completed and will be used to develop the remaining recommendations. This work includes regional, community, service provider, and client engagement. A review of program operations and administration that cross cuts benefit areas will also be conducted. Given the substantial time required to complete a fulsome review of the NIHB program, the JRSC agreed at the outset of the process to implement changes where they are realized and not wait to coincide with benefit review timelines. For example, interim policy changes were made to the Medical

Transportation Framework to reflect an enhanced response to the medical escort policies.

As mandated by Resolution 126/2016 (*Ongoing Commitment for the Non-Insured Health Benefits Joint Review Process*) and 49/2017 (*Non-Insured Health Benefits - Equitable Access to Health Services*), the AFN continues to advocate for ongoing commitment and resourcing from Canada for the implementation of NIHB Joint Review Recommendations and to advance health equity for First Nations; call on Health Canada to provide support and resources for communities and regions to explore governance options for the delivery of NIHB and to advocate for equitable health services; and for the JRSC to explore legislative and legal options to ensure NIHB delivery is based on Treaty and inherent rights. The AFN, with direction from the CCOH, continues to pursue these objectives.

In addition, the AFN sits as an observer on the NIHB Drugs and Therapeutics Advisory Committee (DTAC) that provides recommendations for formulary changes to the NIHB Drug Benefits list; and the NIHB/Canadian Dental Association (CDA) Technical Working Group that provides key recommendations related to dental benefits. The AFN has been working with the CDA, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) and the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) on the joint review, the service provider think-tank and other shared priorities.

Similarly, the AFN also sits as an observer on the recently-formed NIHB National Oral Health Advisory Committee (NOHAC). The committee was established as an independent advisory body of highly qualified oral health professionals and academic specialists to advise the NIHB program and improve oral health outcomes of NIHB clients. A similar advisory board was recommended for the Vision benefit, which will also include an AFN observer.

Finally, the AFN continues to coordinate the National Navigators Network, comprised of NIHB Client Navigators from across the country. The aim is to create a supportive network that allows for the sharing

of best practices in order to aid the Navigators in helping clients access NIHB services. Part of this coordination includes hosting two annual face-to-face meetings. These meetings also allow Navigators to meet with operational NIHB staff to identify and resolve issues when possible. In addition, the Navigators have provided valuable input into the development of the recommendations for the benefit areas which help inform the work of the JRSC.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Mental wellness continues to be a priority for the AFN and First Nations leadership, as directed by Resolution 55/2012 – *Mental Wellness as a National Priority*. This file includes the following priority areas: Mental Wellness, Life Promotion, Substance Use, as well as Intergenerational Trauma and the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Supports Program (IRS RHSP).

The AFN Mental Wellness Committee (MWC) that was established by the NFNHTN in April 2010 guides this work with technical expertise and knowledge of the national, regional and community level issues. The committee meets twice a year, participates in monthly teleconferences and develops strategic direction.

The AFN, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) and Indigenous mental health leaders developed the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework (FNMWC), launched in January 2015, which includes a mental wellness service continuum and outlines opportunities to strengthen existing mental wellness programming for First Nations.

The establishment of the FNMWC Implementation Team has been a key component to implementation of the framework from a social determinant of health approach and is an important step in supporting Resolution 22/2014 – *Support for the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum*. The team, co-chaired by the AFN, the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation, First Peoples Wellness Circle and FNIHB is comprised of

First Nations regional representatives and Indigenous organizations focused on mental health and addictions, along with key federal departments. The team will support the ongoing implementation of the framework and ensure transition in the system to support the provision of culturally based, culturally relevant, and effective mental wellness services to First Nations in the coming years.

The Implementation Team oversaw the FNMWC demonstration projects. The goals were to learn from community adaptations and innovations and share promising practices; support mentorship between First Nations; increase the evidence base for the FNMWC; and facilitate a move away from siloed approaches toward more coordinated and effective approaches. The five demonstration projects were Kwanlin Dun First Nation (YK), Shibogama First Nation Council (ON), Mattawa First Nations Management (ON), Elsipogtog Health and Wellness Centre (NB) and Six Nations Health Services (ON).

The Implementation Team is developing service delivery models for Land-based Programs and Crisis Prevention and Response. These service delivery models are articulated within the continuum of essential services as outlined in the Continuum Framework and are intended to be community tools that guide the design, development, deployment, operation, and evaluation of services. These models convey principles and standards from an Indigenous lens while ensuring cultural protocols and integrity are valued with the same integrity as standards of practice. For example, a standard of practice might be: rights, responsibilities, and client safety.

While First Nations youth face significant challenges around issues of mental health and suicide, they remain a resilient population who can offer the most innovative and relevant solutions to issues that they face. Subsequently, on July 10, 2016 in Niagara Falls the AFN National Youth Council (NYC) hosted a National Youth Summit focused on mental wellness, life promotion, healing and culture, and other related

topics. This event ensured First Nations youth were meaningfully engaged in setting priorities, having opportunities to voice their concerns and strengthen their networks along with key opportunities to exercise their leadership skills.

The AFN continues to participate in various knowledge exchange activities to increase awareness of First Nations priorities, issues, and promising practices around mental wellness.

LIFE PROMOTION

The AFN continues to advocate for more community-based approaches to “Life Promotion” (suicide prevention) activities and programming that create opportunities for First Nations youth to enjoy all the same safeguards that Canadian youth take for granted including holistic and cultural approaches to wellness.

The AFN is a member of the Project Advisory Group for the *Wise Practices for Preventing Youth Suicide in First Nations Communities* project. This project will produce a useful, culturally relevant, accessible, and hopeful resource that will bring together inspirational stories and wise practices from First Nations as well as findings from recently published research.

The AFN National Youth Council (AFN NYC) has prepared formal Calls to Action, which have been endorsed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly. The Minister of Health continues to support the AFN NYC on the implementation of their Calls to Action.

SUBSTANCE USE

Prescription drug abuse (PDA) is a complex and increasing concern for some First Nations. There is also growing concern over the high prevalence of illicit opioid misuse, including the recent spike in fentanyl and carfentanyl use that is moving from the west coast, eastward. The Chiefs-in-Assembly passed emergency Resolution 82/2016, *Development of a First Nations*

Specific Opioid Strategy, calling for action to address the opioid problem.

The AFN is working in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse (CCSA) on a project to expand access to community-based opioid dependence treatment programs involving Suboxone® in First Nations communities. Inspiration was drawn from communities in Northern Ontario's Sioux Lookout Zone (SLZ) that began community-based treatment programs which combined substitution therapy and intensive, culturally-appropriate counselling, land-based programming and trauma-informed approaches to healing.

INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS RESOLUTION HEALTH SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Indian Residential Schools (IRS) Resolution Health Support Program (RHSP) provided mental health and emotional support services to former IRS students and their families before, during and after their participation in the Settlement Agreement processes. The IRS RHSP was linked to the duration of the IRS Settlement Agreement and consequently sunset on March 31, 2016. As a result, there is little to no specific funding dedicated to the healing of IRS survivors.

To this end, the AFN advocated for the continuation of the IRS RHSP beyond 2016, as mandated by Resolution 29/2013 – *Continuation of the Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program beyond 2016*.

The AFN developed an IRS RHSP Program Review report, which examined particular views and impacts going forward should the IRS RHSP cease to exist. The report provided a number of considerations, as well as recommendations to adequately address the needs of survivors and their families. The report is used as an advocacy tool to ensure these important programs and services continue to be accessible to IRS survivors and their families.

In light of the eventual sunset of IRS RHSP and recommendations made under the Joint Review of NIHB's Mental Health benefit, calling for compensation for Traditional Healers and Elders as service providers, the AFN finalized, in collaboration with the Elders Council, a discussion document to inform this policy shift. As a result of this work, the NIHB Mental Health benefit now allows for compensation for Traditional Healers and Elders.

MOVING FORWARD – FIRST NATIONS HEALTH TRANSFORMATION AGENDA

- Work to ensure proper engagement occurs with rights-holders around the move and potential transformation of the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB).
- Update the AFN-FNIHB Engagement Protocol reflecting changes to the department.
- Continue to advance the priorities within the First Nations Transformation Agenda.
- Work to ensure AFN Health activities align with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, as well as the Treaty and inherent right to health.

MOVING FORWARD – NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS

- Ongoing communication with FNIHB's Senior Official / Committees and the NIHB benefits management team.
- Ongoing collaborative efforts with the CMA, CDA, CPhA among others.
- Continued coordination role for the National Navigators Network.
- Continued progress on the AFN/FNIHB Joint Review and advocacy towards commitment to Joint Review Implementation.
- The ongoing implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Joint Review recommendation and implementation plans.

- Utilizing the work of the JRSC to inform options for health care transition and transformation.

MOVING FORWARD – MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- Move the FNMWC Implementation Team work plan forward and support regional work plans.
- Continue to advocate for the inclusion of provinces and territories in the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum work and implementation activities.
- Ensure FNIHB is respecting First Nations processes and protocols on all mental wellness initiatives.

MOVING FORWARD – LIFE PROMOTION

- Continue to participate in the *Wise Practices for Preventing Youth Suicide in First Nations Communities* Project Advisory Group.
- Advocate with the federal government to implement the Calls to Action developed by the AFN NYC.
- Continue to work with partners and the National Collaborative on Suicide Prevention.

MOVING FORWARD – SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- Continue working to expand access to community-based opioid dependence treatment programs involving Suboxone®.
- Finalize a First Nations specific opioid strategy, as guided by Chiefs Committee on Health.
- Continue to engage with partners to implement the *Honouring our Strengths: A Renewed Framework to Address Substance Use Issues Among First Nations People in Canada* (FNIHB, AFN, NNAPF; 2011) framework, and the complementary FNMWC framework.

MOVING FORWARD – INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

- Continue to support activities related to advocacy of the IRS RHSP and healing programs.



Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services Sector

First Nations must lead the development of a First Nations National Housing and related Infrastructure Strategy to ensure the future housing and related infrastructure reform is envisioned from First Nations' perspectives respecting regional variances.

Resolution 27/2017, *Development of a First Nations National Housing and Infrastructure Strategy*, mandates the AFN to jointly develop, with the Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure (CCoHI) and the federal government, a Terms of Reference for the establishment of a Joint Working Group that will develop a First Nations National Housing and related Infrastructure Strategy, which will include housing both on- and off-reserve and in northern territories.

A Joint Working Group with representatives from the AFN, CCoHI, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has been established. The Joint Working Group developed a Draft Policy Reform Framework Towards a First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Strategy (Policy Reform Framework).

The Policy Reform Framework was shared at the Special Chiefs Assembly in December 2017 and highlights were presented at a strategy and dialogue session. AFN Resolution 87/2017, *Support for a National Housing and Infrastructure Policy Reform Framework*, was passed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly to support the Policy Reform Framework to be included as an Annex in Indigenous Services Canada's Memorandum to Cabinet (MC).

ISC's MC was scheduled to be presented to Cabinet in December 2017 but was postponed. The Policy Reform Framework is still an outstanding document to be shared with Cabinet.

The AFN will continue to seek the co-development of ISC's MC and will advocate for new, additional and sufficient funding to support the transition process, including dedicated resources to support engagement with First Nations, and the development and implementation of regional strategies and plans. The Policy Reform Framework will form part of the building blocks for the development of a First Nations National Housing and Infrastructure Strategy.

The Joint Working Group is currently developing a Draft First Nations National Housing and Infrastructure Strategy. A key component to this strategy is data gathering to establish First Nations' needs in housing and related infrastructure. A data collection exercise will be undertaken this summer to identify needs for the Federal Budget 2019.

The Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure will continue to provide direction and support on the development of a Draft Strategy. A strategy and dialogue session is being planned for the upcoming 2018 Annual General Assembly where the Draft Strategy will be presented. A Fall 2018 target date has been set to present the Draft Strategy and data collection that will support ISC's Memorandum to Cabinet.

The Draft Strategy will form part of broader initiatives that include the following building blocks:

1. The Policy Reform Framework Towards First Nations Housing and Infrastructure (December 2017)
2. First Nations National Housing and related Infrastructure Strategy (target Fall 2018)
3. Strategic Plan with short, medium, and long-term goals and objectives (Target fall/winter 2018)

Sector Reports // Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services

4. Regional Strategies and Plans (currently underway and ongoing)

The AFN will support engagement sessions with First Nations on the development and implementation of a Strategy, regional strategies, and plans.

First Nations Chiefs and Councils have the jurisdiction and authority over housing and infrastructure. Moving towards First Nations care, control, and management of housing and infrastructure requires engagement with First Nations to discuss needs, plans, and strategies. This transformative change must be First Nations-led.

INFRASTRUCTURE (OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE)

The current funding formulas and cost indices as identified in Indigenous Services Canada's (ISC) Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Policy are outdated, inadequate, and do not provide sufficient funding for First Nations to protect and prolong the life of their community assets. The federal government only funds a portion of the estimated costs for the O&M of on-reserve infrastructure such as buildings, roads, and bridges, etc.

AFN Resolution 80/2017, *Support for Review of Canada's Operations and Maintenance Policy*, supports the co-development of a joint Work Plan and of a new O&M Policy Framework with full involvement of First Nations and/or their organizations, the AFN, and the CCoHI.

A Joint Work Plan was co-developed and shared at the Special Chiefs Assembly in December 2017 at the strategy and dialogue session. The AFN hosted an O&M Experts meeting in March 2018. The O&M Experts meeting recommended an Asset Management-based approach and that two pilot projects in each region be carried out in order to inform ISC of the required costs for a fully funded asset management approach.

The AFN will work with First Nations' regional organizations to undertake these pilot projects. The AFN will facilitate regional engagement sessions to seek broader input and support on recommendations of the Draft Policy Options and to review regional practices and gaps. Two-day regional engagement sessions involving tribal councils, First Nations, and regional organizations will bring forward O&M technical expertise to review and provide input on a draft O&M Policy Framework.

The AFN Housing and Infrastructure Sector is committed to working with First Nations and ISC to identify options for the co-development of a new O&M Policy Framework and formula that will contribute to addressing the socio-economic gaps in First Nations.

Restore Technical Services Back to First Nations for CMHC Housing Programs

Despite First Nations opposition, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) made a unilateral decision to change its delivery service and awarded a national contract to a single service provider called OZHI First Nations Professional Services to provide progress and physical condition reviews for CMHC's on-reserve programs.

This meant that the services provided previously by First Nations, tribal councils, and technical service providers were no longer required. First Nations have expressed concerns with the selected contractor's readiness, responsiveness, and capacity to carry out the work in a manner that meets the required service standards and program deadlines as previously provided by First Nation Technical Service Providers.

AFN Resolution 28/2017 (*Restore Technical Services back to First Nations for CMHC Housing Programs*) called for the contract with OZHI First Nations Professional Services to be rescinded and to restore the technical services provided by First Nations, Tribal Councils, and First Nations Technical Service Providers.

Sector Reports // Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services

As a result of the many letters issued by First Nations and their regional organizations, and the advocacy work by the AFN with support of the Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure, CMHC is finally responding to our concerns.

CMHC is asking for a coordinated effort – a regional model that can serve all First Nations communities in the region. Some First Nation representative organizations have submitted proposals to CMHC which are currently being reviewed. The AFN is facilitating discussions between First Nations and CMHC to discuss the status of their proposals. CMHC will be meeting with First Nations to determine their proposals in detail. OZHI will continue to provide this service until the transition to First Nations is complete and new contracts and agreements are signed.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Emergency Services unit advocates for more prominent consideration and presence of emergency management issues in First Nations before, during and after events that befall communities. This is achieved through analysis of existing policies and procedures to ensure a First Nations voice and that consistent information is maintained at all levels, as well as recommending and advocating for the implementation of needed changes.

The AFN works toward the objective of increasing consideration of First Nations Emergency Management through: advocating for fair, adequate, and equitable emergency management and response services; facilitating discussion on emergency management and response; analyzing policies and advocating for change, improvement and the inclusion of First Nations on issues of direct concern; initiating and engaging in discussion on current emergency issues management and response for First Nations; and, analysis and knowledge sharing with First Nations groups and organizations regarding emergency issues management and response.

Resolution 03/2015 directed the AFN to call upon the Government of Canada to include First Nations in the development of trilateral or bilateral agreements between First Nations and Canada related to mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery planning, as well as to ensure Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and provincial partners work collaboratively with First Nations leaders.

There is an ongoing issue with the inordinate amount of time it takes to repatriate First Nations evacuees to their home community or in one case, to establish relocation. As of June 1, 2018, 3,265 members are still away from home due to floods dating back to 2010. In Manitoba, 1,701 members are still away from home due to the 2011 flood (down 700 from 2,401 of last year), as are 528 members from the Alberta flood of 2013. There are also 52 of 146 members still evacuated from 2017 spring floods. While efforts are underway to repatriate and provide new housing, this is an unacceptable length of time to be away from home.

Emergency Management funding proposal

The AFN has been administering the Emergency Management file since 2011. Funding from Indigenous Services Canada's Emergency Management Directorate (EMD) was not renewed after two years; the AFN has been managing this file without funding support for staff or advocacy activities.

In 2017, a new funding application was submitted to ISC EMD requesting full funding support for the AFN on this file. An advance was accepted to allow the AFN to develop a work plan to support the planned work for 2017-2018 and beyond.

Emergency Management Forum

The AFN hosted an Emergency Management Forum on March 28–30, 2017 in Calgary, Alberta. The Forum was well-received with 166 participants. It informed delegates on emergency management programs and activities, and demonstrated the size of the

Sector Reports // Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services

federal family related to First Nations emergency management. There was overwhelming interest in an annual forum. The AFN has applied for adequate and appropriate funding to host a 2nd Annual Emergency Management Forum in 2017/2018. However, the ISC EMD has yet to provide a positive response.

Chiefs Committee on Emergency Management (CCEM)

The Chiefs Committee on Emergency Management held its first teleconference on May 18, 2017. The second teleconference took place on June 12, 2018 to update the committee on AFN Emergency Services (ES) activities and to introduce the new portfolio holder, Regional Chief Marlene Poitras. ISC has provided some support funding to host face-to-face meetings and conference calls.

Now more formal in structure, the CCEM has begun its work of offering advice, guidance and recommendations on documents related to AFN ES files.

Public Safety Canada

Public Safety Canada has begun collaborating with the AFN on the development of an Engagement Strategy for the National Emergency Management Strategy (NEMS), which includes Search and Rescue (SAR), Public Safety Broadband Network (PSBN) and the National Public Alerting System (NPAS).

Public Safety Canada and the F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Emergency Management

On May 24, 2018, Alberta Regional Chief Marlene Poitras, the new Emergency Management portfolio holder, participated in a dedicated meeting on Indigenous Emergency Management with F/P/T Ministers responsible for Emergency Management in Ottawa, Ontario, co-hosted by Minister of Public Safety Ralph Goodale and Deputy Minister Shaye Anderson, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Alberta. Discussion included the Indigenous Inventory of Emergency

Management Capabilities as a first step to determine the preparedness of First Nations. The AFN has developed a proposal to carry out the inventory.

The AFN has also begun work on the Engagement Strategy producing a project description, project charter, data collection instrument, and a Community Piloting Project to test-run the questionnaire. Preliminary pilot communities include Kahnawake, Akwesasne, Pikwakanagan, and Kitigan Zibi. Projects are set to begin in June 2018 and end in the fall of 2018. Further pilots are scheduled for Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy: A 10 Year Review and Renewed Call to Action

The AFN was invited to a discussion on the Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy, which was prepared by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM). The lead federal department is Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN). The Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy was created under the auspices of the CCFM in 2005. Given increased strains being placed on firefighting resources, it is expected that fire management agencies will leverage the refreshed strategy to seek additional resources to help increase investments in fire prevention and mitigation and to supplement existing firefighting resources. First Nations may have significant interest in the strategy from at least two perspectives. The first is related to options to mitigate risks from forest fires around communities in forested regions. The second is related to the possibility of training and mobilization of Indigenous people in fire suppression. Work on this file is ongoing.

ISC Emergency Notifications

Through cooperation with the ISC Emergency Management Directorate, the AFN continues to provide its regions with timely notifications, both national and regional in scope, on emergency issues which affect First Nations.

Sector Reports // Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services

Canadian Red Cross

The AFN maintains an ongoing relationship and engagement with the Canadian Red Cross and, in conjunction with the AFN Health Secretariat, has been working on reviewing and revising the current Memorandum of Understanding between the organizations into a “Relationship Protocol” with a more operational component. Reflected in the draft protocol, the Red Cross is interested in working with First Nations in a mutually respectful and supportive manner to explore culturally appropriate and sustainable ways to deliver its three key programmatic areas across the country: Emergencies & Disasters, Community Health, and Prevention & Safety. Work on this file is ongoing.

WATER UPDATE

Many First Nations continue to face urgent unsafe drinking water issues. Long-term drinking water advisories remain in effect in First Nations across the country. The federal government has committed to eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories (DWAs) on public systems on reserve (there are 1,047 such systems) by 2021 and has allocated resources to achieve that commitment. Part of achieving – and maintaining – the elimination of all DWAs is the creation of legislation that adequately, properly, and respectfully fills the regulatory gap regarding safe drinking water on reserves. Budget 2016 provided \$1.8 billion over five years and Budget 2018 provides an additional \$172.6 million over three years, beginning in 2018-19, to improve access to clean and safe drinking water on reserves. It is in this context that last year’s work on safe drinking water for First Nations was carried out.

The *Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act* (SDWFNA) came into force November 1, 2013 and authorized the government to develop enforceable federal regulations to ensure access to safe, clean and reliable drinking water; the effective treatment of wastewater, and the protection of sources of drinking water on First Nation

lands. At the 2015 Annual General Assembly, the Prime Minister, then leader of the Liberal Party, indicated that the Act was an example of “the government dictating terms rather than working in partnership to support First Nations governance”. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), now Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), was proceeding with its engagement strategy on this problematic legislation unilaterally and had not indicated they would adequately address outstanding concerns with the SDWFNA. First Nations concerns include the lack of meaningful engagement on the Act as both Bill S-11 and Bill S-8; the incorporation of provincial regulations; the lack of funding associated with the Act; and the increased liability placed on First Nations to meet regulations. Engagements by the federal department began in mid-June 2017 and proceeded until September 2017 despite calls for those engagements to cease by First Nations.

The SDWFNA is unacceptable and ineffective in meeting the basic human right of access to clean water and sanitation. The federal government has made clear commitments to ensure First Nations have equity with non-First Nations in terms of water quality standards and equity in water access; in 2017-2018 they have begun to acknowledge that a First Nations led process to deal with the current legislation is needed.

Three AFN resolutions were passed on safe drinking water related matters in 2017-18 and sustained advocacy by the AFN helped shift the approach of the federal government on the SDWFNA.

Resolution 26/2017 directed the AFN to communicate with the Office of the Prime Minister and Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada for acknowledgement of Resolution 76/2015 which had called for the SDWFNA to be repealed. Resolution 26/2017 also directed the AFN to communicate to the federal government that the engagement sessions for review of the SDWFNA must be terminated and called for the federal government to work directly with First Nations to determine the appropriate

Sector Reports // Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services

next steps. Furthermore, it called on the federal government to develop, in partnership with First Nations, appropriate outcomes for the provision of safe drinking water including the identification of funds for sorely needed capital investments, operations and maintenance funding, and personnel, and training for all First Nations communities, to improve the state of First Nations water systems while a new legislative framework is being developed.

Resolution 26/2017 also re-affirmed Resolution 29/2014, which supported the legal action by Ermineskin Cree Nation, Kainai First Nation (Blood Tribe), Tsuut'ina Nation and Sucker Creek First Nation, against Canada for breach of its fiduciary duty and legal obligations under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* to ensure safe on-reserve drinking water. Resolution 29/2014 also called for full support of efforts by First Nations to establish, in Canadian law, the right to clean drinking water for all First Nations and encourage other First Nations with drinking water issues to join the legal action.

Resolution 88/2017 directed the AFN to establish a joint Working Group comprised of the AFN Chiefs Committee on Housing and Infrastructure and their regional technicians, federal representatives, legal counsel for AFN and the federal government, and other experts, as necessary, to co-develop a draft framework for new legislation. This Resolution also required the AFN to call upon the federal government to commit to adequate multi-year funding for the co-development of a draft framework for new legislation and to support First Nations engagement sessions as the critical first step. The Resolution also called for the AFN to create a framework for a First Nations Water Commission with First Nations and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, and to call on the federal government to secure funding for the design and implementation of a Water Commission. It was also AFN's mandate to ensure that the co-development of a draft framework for new legislation is respectful of First Nations inherent rights and Indigenous laws and meets the

spirit and intent of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

Resolution 01/2018, *First Nations Led Process to Develop New Federal Safe Drinking Water Legislation*, took this process even further and mandated the AFN to immediately communicate to the federal government that, in keeping with the Government's commitments to reconciliation with First Nations, a joint legislative co-development process and mandate will proceed in full partnership with First Nations, including the development of a Joint Working Group on Safe Drinking Water for First Nations.

The AFN was called upon to immediately appoint a Chiefs Committee on First Nations Safe Drinking Water Legislation that will oversee the development of a Terms of Reference for the creation of the Joint Working Group on Safe Drinking Water for First Nations which will then produce a draft framework for safe drinking water legislation for First Nations, for consideration by the Chiefs-in-Assembly at the AFN Annual General Assembly in July 2018. The AFN and the Chiefs Committee on First Nations Safe Drinking Water Legislation were also called upon to develop a draft framework for the creation of the First Nations Water Commission. Finally the AFN was called upon to immediately develop and convey a funding proposal to the federal government that would ensure that the Chiefs Committee on First Nations Safe Drinking Water Legislation and the Joint Working Group on Safe Drinking Water for First Nations have the resources required to participate in this joint legislative co-development process in full partnership with First Nations and the federal government. The AFN was tasked with ensuring that the draft framework for safe drinking water legislation for First Nations affirms First Nations inherent water laws, standards, guidelines and processes.

Sector Reports // Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Sustained Advocacy on the SDWFNA Shifted Government's Position on the SDWFNA

Supported by the determination of First Nations Chiefs to reject the SDWFNA, as mandated in the above-mentioned resolutions, the AFN continually engaged with INAC/ISC throughout 2017-18 as part of its ongoing advocacy. A key turning point occurred in late July 2017 following a letter from National Chief Bellegarde to the then Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Carolyn Bennett. Minister Bennett explicitly stated that support would be provided for developing a process for First Nations to co-draft appropriate safe water legislation and to explore the question of how to ensure adequate and sufficient funding for the continued operation and maintenance of drinking water infrastructure on First Nations.

National Water Symposium and Trade Show

The AFN National Water Symposium, hosted February 6-8, 2018 in Vancouver on Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Territory, provided an opportunity to facilitate discussion with First Nations in conceptualizing, elaborating, designing, and implementing a re-envisioned engagement process for the review of the SDWFNA.

As the beginning of the dialogue, this Symposium sought input on how revising the SDWFNA should be accomplished. The agenda included keynotes, expert panels, workshops, and a trade show. These sessions provided an opportunity to hear from those who are engaged in work related to sustainable water management, innovative technologies and new training methods, and climate change adaptation. Stories, experiences and lessons were shared from First Nations who are leading their own approaches to care and control of water and wastewater. Across the range of sessions, there were a number of key themes related to the challenges and opportunities around legal,

governance, and planning issues; and funding, capacity, technology and technical/operational issues.

The discussion over the course of the three-day Symposium helped generate an initial set of goals upon which acceptable legislation must be based, as well as process considerations for the development of the legislation. One of the strongest themes emerging from the discussion was that First Nations law (Indigenous and customary laws, treaties, Aboriginal rights) and governance systems must be acknowledged and strengthened through new legislation. Many speakers spoke about the need for this particularly in the context of the overarching goals of the *UN Declaration*, the TRC Calls to Action, and the need for reconciliation. Many statements were made by participants in response to the numerous presentations at the Water Symposium. The main sentiment was in support of the goal of effective legislation to ensure safe drinking water. Participants emphasized how water is connected to many aspects of life, the economy and the environment. First Nations safe drinking water legislation needs to focus on safe drinking water goals, but it must also recognize the cultural significance and sacredness of water. The critical issue of mandatory funding that accompanies the legislation was front of mind to many participants; as was the need for recognition and application of First Nations laws. Participants also identified a wide range of technical issues that are important to consider ensuring that the new legislation can be practically implemented to meet diverse communities' needs, in longevity.

The Start of a Process of First Nations Led Repeal and Replacement of the SDWFNA

Because sustained advocacy led to progress on the SDWFNA in 2017-18, Resolution 88/2017, *First Nations led Engagement Process for Safe Drinking Water Legislation*, mandated the AFN to co-develop a draft framework for First Nations safe drinking water legislation in a manner that respects the principles of First Nations inherent rights and laws, and in a

Sector Reports // Housing, Infrastructure and Emergency Services

manner consistent with the spirit of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. To fulfill this mandate the AFN initiated dialogue at the National Water Symposium and, building upon that dialogue, prepared a *Concept Paper on the Process to Develop a New Federal Bill on Safe Drinking Water for First Nations*.

This Concept Paper was shared and discussed with the Chiefs Joint Working Group on Housing and Infrastructure on April 30, 2018. A Strategy and Dialogue Session at the Special Chiefs Assembly on Federal Legislation (SCA) on May 1, 2018 expanded upon this discussion with more Chiefs and delegates. As a result, Resolution 01/2018, *First Nations Led Process to Develop New Federal Safe Drinking Water Legislation*, was passed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly at the SCA.

This Resolution is described above but in brief the process of First Nations led repeal and replacement of the SDWFNA appears to be moving forward. Because this process is complex and of massive significance to all First Nations the AFN is approaching this work in a phased process that will continually return to the Chiefs-in-Assembly for their endorsement and support as the co-development process proceeds into 2018-19. Last year's work led to the federal Crown acknowledging that First Nations must lead the process of conceptualizing, elaborating, designing and implementing an engagement process for new safe drinking water legislation.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- Appointment of a Special Chiefs Committee on First Nations Safe Drinking Water Legislation.
- Creation of a Joint Working Group on Safe Drinking Water for First Nations and proceeding with co-development of a draft framework for First Nations safe drinking water legislation.
- Presenting the draft framework for First Nations safe drinking water legislation to the

AFN AGA in July of 2018 for endorsement by the Chiefs-in-Assembly.

- Expanded regional and national engagement with First Nations about the draft framework for First Nations safe drinking water legislation throughout late 2018 including hosting another National Water Symposium and Trade Show in 2019.
- Ongoing participation in a co-development process for First Nations safe drinking water legislation, incorporating feedback and insights from First Nations so that as the SDWFNA is repealed a truly First Nations led safe drinking water law will be created to take its place.



Lands, Territories and Resources Sector

The Lands, Territories and Resources Sector focuses on Additions to Reserves (ATR), Specific Claims, and First Nations without reserves lands. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has held focused sessions on these issues. Resolutions mandating AFN to work on these issues include:

- 48/2005 – *Mandate and Direction to Address “Bandless-Landless Issues”*
- 46/2015 – *Specific Claims Call to Action*
- 17/2016 – *Call on Canada to update the Additions to Reserve Policy*
- 91/2017 – *Support for a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Additions to Reserve (ATR)

Efforts to improve the Additions to Reserve (ATR) policy was the subject of a joint AFN-Canada technical working group (JWG) process that was initiated in late 2009. Progress with this working group was based on regular engagement with the Chiefs Committee on Claims (CCoC), and ultimately resulted in the release of a new ATR policy in 2016.

Canada has formed a National Advisory Committee on ATR tasked with informing policy implementation and developing tools and best practices to support First Nation communities engaged in the ATR process. The Advisory Committee includes a number of First Nation participants: the AFN and the National Aboriginal Land Managers Association (NALMA).

The AFN engaged with First Nations and First Nations Land Managers on the new ATR policy. The information obtained from these engagements will continue to

guide AFN advocacy efforts at forums such as the National Advisory Committee on ATR.

Specific Claims

In late 2016, the AFN and Canada formed a Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) with a mandate to examine the specific claims process and develop joint recommendations for change. The JTWG has been meeting consistently over the past year and a half.

In 2017, the AFN hosted two dialogue sessions with First Nations, one in Ottawa and one in Vancouver. The message that came out of these sessions reflected what First Nations have said consistently over time: Canada’s ongoing management and control of the specific claims process constitutes a conflict of interest which can only be addressed through independent oversight.

During the fall of 2017, the AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 91/2017, *Support for a Fully Independent Specific Claims Process*, calling for the creation of an independent specific claims process and support for the work of the JTWG.

Landless Bands

Over the past number of years First Nations without reserve lands has been an ongoing focus of AFN advocacy at the ATR JWG table. However, despite ongoing emphasis by the AFN, Canada has always been hesitant to have a substantive discussion on the issue.

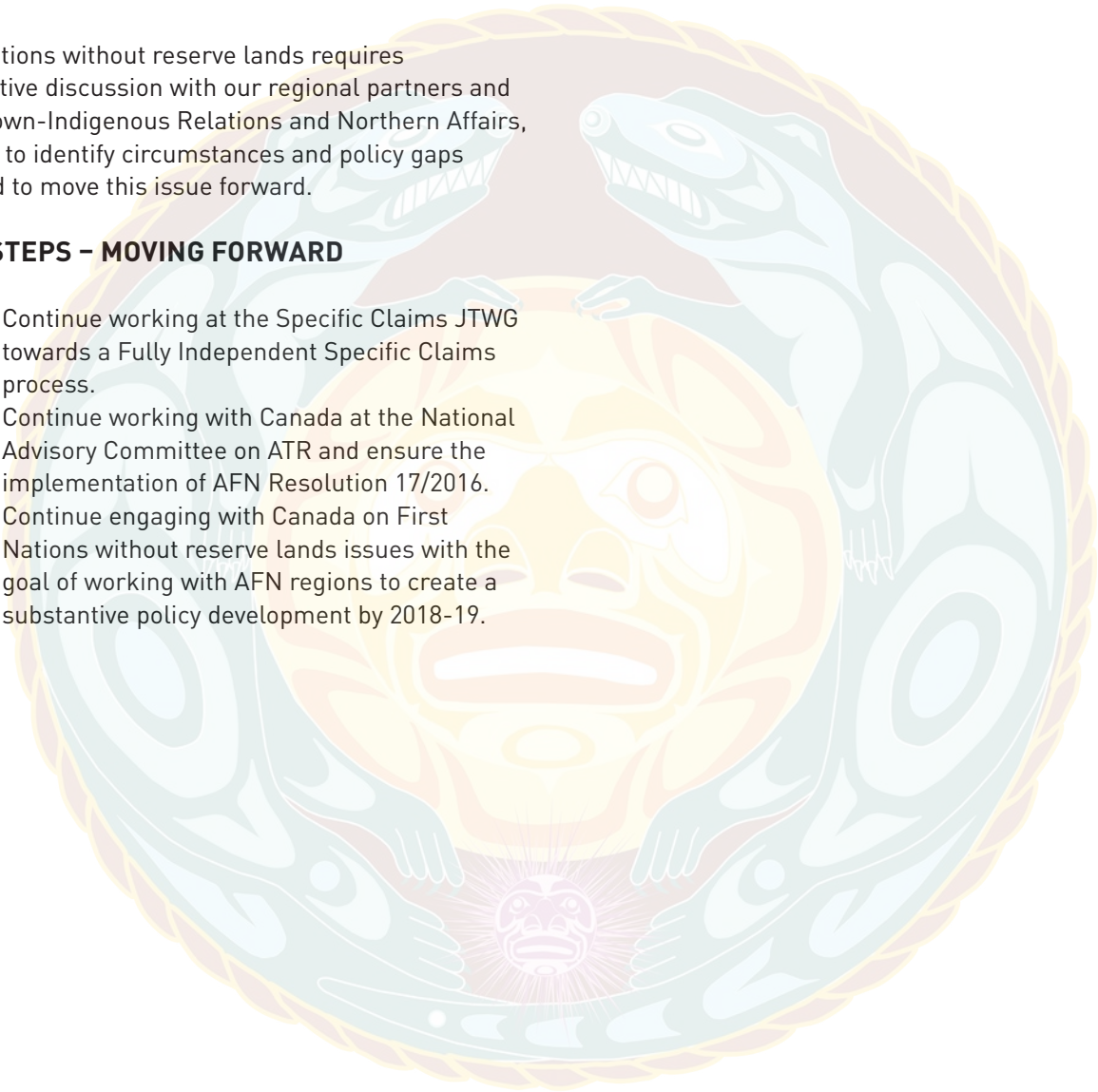
In April 2017 and May 2018 the AFN held sessions to better understand who was without reserve lands, and what common issues they shared. The sessions were chaired by the National Chief and included First

Nations and several senior officials from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (now Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs).

First Nations without reserve lands requires substantive discussion with our regional partners and with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs, in order to identify circumstances and policy gaps required to move this issue forward.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- Continue working at the Specific Claims JTWG towards a Fully Independent Specific Claims process.
- Continue working with Canada at the National Advisory Committee on ATR and ensure the implementation of AFN Resolution 17/2016.
- Continue engaging with Canada on First Nations without reserve lands issues with the goal of working with AFN regions to create a substantive policy development by 2018-19.





Languages Sector

The Government of Canada has committed to recognizing the language rights of Indigenous peoples. On December 26, 2016, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that the Canadian government would jointly develop legislation for the revitalization and recovery of Indigenous languages. The Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH), Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), and Métis National Council (MNC) agreed to a Statement of Co-Development Principles on June 14, 2017, and are working together on the development of legislation through the Co-Development Working Group.

The AFN is advocating that legislation recognize First Nations language rights including jurisdiction and to establish long-term, sustainable, consistent, and appropriate funding to support efforts to revitalize, reclaim, maintain, preserve and promote First Nations languages. The AFN's work at the Co-Development Table is based on instruction from the Chiefs-in-Assembly and the Indigenous Languages Initiatives (ILI) Engagement Sessions Report. At the December 5-6, 2017, AFN Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA), the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 77/2017, *Support for Continued Co-Development Work on the Indigenous Languages Act*, providing further direction for the joint development of Indigenous languages legislation. The resolution endorsed a set of principles, which are set out in the ILI Engagement Report, and based on the guidance received during the sessions. The Chiefs Committee on Languages (CCOL) and Technical Committee on Languages (TCOL) are engaged in the co-development process, including through oversight, guidance and providing substantive contribution towards potential legislative content.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Statement of Co-development Principles

On June 14, 2017, Canada/AFN/ITK/MNC agreed to a Statement of Co-development Principles. All parties agreed to co-develop legislation that addresses the revitalization, recovery, preservation, protection, maintenance and promotion of First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages, through two mechanisms: a joint co-development working group to discuss issues of common concern, and bilateral working groups between Canada and ITK, MNC, and AFN to address issues that are specific to each cultural group. Key to the co-development table's success has been transparency and recognition of a distinctions-based approach to the legislation.

Indigenous Languages Engagement Sessions

From August to October, 2017, the AFN Languages Sector conducted seven regional engagement sessions, inviting Elders, language experts, speakers, teachers, and youth, to provide insight into the nascent First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Languages Act. With the insights and experiences of over 630 participants, the Languages Sector commissioned a report on the engagement sessions, which was summarized in the 11 principles outlined in Resolution 77/2017, *Support for Continued Co-Development Work on the Indigenous Languages Act*. Passed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly at the December 2017 Special Chiefs Assembly, this resolution has given the Languages Sector the ability to proceed with their weekly meetings at the co-development table, as well as within the four sub-working groups.

Development of Co-development Principles

As part of the Working Group process and towards focusing discussion on the content of the proposed legislation, the Working Group, by consensus, agreed to Key Principles to be reflected in the proposed legislation. The Key Principles were used to develop the federal government's Intensive Engagement Discussion Guide. The federal government will be conducting an Intensive Engagement process between June 18 and August 31, 2018 at various locations across the country.

Languages Costing Analysis

The key message received from First Nations leaders and language experts about what's needed is substantial financial resources. The Languages Sector has contracted economists to provide a costing analysis that is responsive to the various approaches of languages revitalization recovery, preservation, protection, maintenance and promotion of fluency.

International Mother Languages Day

The Languages Sector partnered with the Education Sector to highlight UNESCO's International Mother Languages Day (IMLD). As part of the AFN First Nations Directors of Education Forum, the IMLD evening gathering celebrated speakers, and gave language experts and speakers the opportunity to connect and learn more about the upcoming languages legislation.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- The AFN Languages Sector will be holding preparatory pre-engagement sessions prior to the Government of Canada's Intensive Engagement Sessions from June 18 to August 31, 2018. The aim is to prepare First Nations representatives attending the Engagement Sessions for meaningful engagement with the Government of Canada.
- The AFN Languages Sector is preparing a costing analysis in advance of the drafting of

the legislation which is intended to be prepared for July, 2018.

- The First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Languages Act is intended to be introduced to the House of Commons in the fall of 2018.
- The AFN Languages Sector will be advocating for the non-partisan approval of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Languages Act, to advance Resolution 77/2017, *Support for Continued Co-Development Work on the Indigenous Languages Act*.
- The AFN Languages Sector will use the International Year of Indigenous Languages as a platform to advocate for the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Languages Act.
- The target is to have the legislation receive Royal Assent by June of 2019, during the current government's mandate.
- Access to Information for the DCH Engagement:

Have your say:

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/indigenous-languages-legislation/intensive-engagement.html>

Discussion Guide

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/indigenous-languages-legislation/intensive-engagement/discussion-guide.html>

Reference Material

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/indigenous-languages-legislation/intensive-engagement/reference-material.html>

Calendar

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/indigenous-languages-legislation/intensive-engagement/calendar.html>



Legal Affairs and Justice Sector

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector provides two functions on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN). Firstly, the Sector provides policy advice on matters involving the Canadian justice system, public safety, corrections, border security, *Indian Act* reforms and gender issues. Secondly, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector provides legal advice and litigation support to the AFN. The provision of legal advice ensures that the organization's activities are conducted in accordance with the AFN Charter, governing policies and any federal corporation regulations. The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector has been assigned responsibility for monitoring, analyzing and interpreting federal legislation and regulations. The Sector supports the National Chief and the Executive Committee in providing evidence before Parliamentary Standing Committees on any draft legislation under consideration. Finally, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector directs any litigation that the AFN is involved in.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a) Gender Concerns

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector is tasked to provide policy advice on matters that deal with gender inequality, and gaps in programs and services for women. The Sector has been engaged in various meetings and activities over the past year. AFN Staff has participated in the Federal, Provincial and Territorial meeting of the Ministers of Status of Women held on November 9, 2017, in Ottawa. This marked the first time that the Minister of the Status of Women and the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs (CIRNA) have invited the First Nation Women Chiefs to participate in a high-level meeting to discuss issues specific to First Nation women and girls. The meeting also provided an excellent opportunity

for the Women's Council to discuss its priorities and explore building partnerships.

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector also provided policy support to the Women's Council to effectively participate in the *Second North American Trilateral Working Group on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls* held on November 30, 2017, in Ottawa. The objective of the event is to move the discussion on eradicating violence against Indigenous women towards addressing not only the criminal justice and victimization aspects of violence but also how to tackle crime prevention through empowerment, education and outreach.

On January 29, 2018, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector participated in *Statistics Canada and Status of Women Canada Stakeholder Engagement Session on Violence Among Post-Secondary Students* in Ottawa, Ontario. In June 2017, Status of Women Canada released 'It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence'. As part of this strategy, Status of Women Canada along with Statistics Canada developed a draft survey on sexual victimization among post-secondary students. The AFN participated in this engagement session, providing valuable insight into the development of the survey on sexual victimization among First Nations women and girls post-secondary students.

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector provided policy and logistical support and for representatives of the Women's Council to the 62nd session of the Commission on Status of Women at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, NY, from March 11-17, 2018. The AFN participated in the following events:

- Barriers to Justice for Indigenous Women and Girls
- Advocates and Auditors: The New “A-Team” for Gender Equality
- Violence Knows No Borders
- Empowering Rural Women and Girls
- Engaging Men and Boys

Moreover, on March 29, 2018, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector attended the *Global Affairs Canada and Canada’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security* in Ottawa, Ontario. The Council provided comments on how the Women, Peace and Security Advisory Group can help advance the situation for Indigenous women and girls in conflict-affected states, and contribute to implementing the Action Plan.

b) Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

The Government of Canada launched the independent National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) in September 2016. AFN Resolution 37/2014, *Support for Families First*, mandates the AFN Executive to take a “Families First” approach to ensuring that there is a respectful inclusion of voices and perspectives of the families in the discussions and development of action plans on the issue of MMIWG.

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector continues to participate in the truth gathering process across Canada, which consists of:

- Community Hearings – (Completed)
- Institutional Hearings – (Completed)
- Knowledge Keeper and Expert Hearings (Ongoing)

The Interim Report of the National Inquiry entitled “Our Women and Girls are Sacred” was released on November 1, 2017.

On February 8, 2018, the Commissioners met with the leadership of AFN, as well as representatives from Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), Women of the Métis Nation, Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC), Pauktuutit and Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) to discuss future hearings, the mandate extension, standing and contribution agreements.

On June 5, 2018, the federal government announced that it granted the Commissioners of the National Inquiry an extension of their mandate until April 30, 2019, and until June 30, 2019 to wind down the National Inquiry’s operations.

c) Border Security

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector is presently engaged in work related to border security. Our work in this areas falls into two general categories: right of First Nations to freely cross the Canada–USA border pursuant to the Jay Treaty; and the creation of secured Identity Cards for border crossing issued by First Nations governments.

On December 16, 2016, Minister Bennett appointed Mr. Fred Caron as a Ministerial Special Representative and mandated him to engage with First Nations in proximity to the Canada–USA border. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss First Nations views on Canada–US border crossing challenges and potential solutions. He released his final report to Minister Bennett in August 2017. The National Chief and the AFN Executive Committee called for the establishment of a Chiefs Committee on Border Crossings to provide direction on AFN’s work in this area.

The AFN Executive appointed former Grand Chief Mike Mitchell as the AFN Special Representative on Border Security Issues. Mr. Mitchell is mandated to meet with Canadian and USA officials to discuss the development of a secured Indigenous identification border access card. The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector supports the work of Mr. Mitchell in coordinating meetings between U.S. agencies, Canadian agencies, Native American

Tribes and First Nations for the Secured Indigenous Identification Border Access Card Project. This project focuses on identifying technical support and secured Indigenous identification card resources in Canada and the U.S. The AFN has successfully hosted two Secured Indigenous Identification Border Access Card Working Group meetings in November 2016 and July 2017 to support this project.

The AFN submitted a funding proposal to CIRNA for meaningful engagements between the federal government and First Nations which will ensure that inherent rights are respected and that border crossing policies and practices are reflective of the unique circumstances and realities of First Nations and First Nations citizens. This initiative will require identification of the Indigenous populations (both Native American Tribes and First Nations) situated along the Canada/U.S. border. This initiative will also require engagement with federal and provincial government departments, ministries and agencies in Canada, as well as U.S. Homeland Security, to determine how proposed solutions to border crossing issues can meet the existing Canadian and U.S. security requirements.

d) Gaming

First Nations are largely excluded from the gaming industry through the operation of the *Criminal Code of Canada* and provincial regulations. As a result, the majority of First Nations cannot take advantage of the revenue opportunities offered by the gaming industry.

AFN National Chief Bellegarde and the AFN Executive Committee held the first Chiefs Committee on Gaming on March 20, 2018, at the Dakota Dunes Casino in Whitecap, SK. This meeting brought together Chiefs from across Canada, various casino gaming operators and regulators. Participants discussed gaming operations and the various challenges First Nations experience under current legal frameworks. Furthermore, they discussed ways to engage with governments and possible options for First Nations to

assert their inherent rights and take full advantage of the economic possibilities gaming offers.

e) Bill S-3

On December 12, 2017, S-3, *An Act to amend the Indian Act in response to the Superior Court of Quebec decision in Descheneaux c. Canada*, received Royal Assent. The amended legislation required the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to initiate consultations on issues related to registration and Band membership and to conduct reviews on sex-based inequities under the *Indian Act*, and to report to Parliament on those activities. Minister Bennett formally launched the comprehensive consultations of the Collaborative Process on Indian Registration, Band Membership, and First Nation Citizenship on June 12, 2018. The AFN participated in the Collaborative Process design by providing feedback and support on ways to engage with First Nations across Canada.

Further, an advisory panel was established by CIRNA to provide advice and recommendations to the federal government on the implementation of broad consultations with First Nations on issues of discrimination relating to Indian status registration, of which the AFN is a panel member.

f) Policing & Public Safety

On June 12, 2016, the AFN and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) signed a Relationship Building Protocol. The first of many meetings was held at RCMP National Headquarters in Ottawa, Ontario, on September 22, 2017. This meeting aligned the objectives of the partnership, identified potential challenges, and established the ongoing processes to operationalize the Protocol. The AFN and RCMP are working towards jointly identifying possible incidents and issues of discrimination in the RCMP and developing a long-term strategic response.

The AFN has continued discussions with Public Safety Canada and Emergency Preparedness to ensure the

interests of First Nations are kept safe, while protecting the rights of First Nations citizens. In particular, the AFN's advocacy has focused on: support for First Nations Police Services as an "essential service"; protection of Aboriginal and Treaty rights regarding Bill C-71, that proposes amendments to firearms legislation; monitoring Bill C-59 that proposes measures to improve Canada's national security framework; and, addressing discrimination that is still prevalent in Canadian police services.

The AFN received financial support from Public Safety Canada for the period covering January 11, 2018, through March 31, 2019. On March 26 and 27, 2018, the AFN hosted a meeting in Wendake, Quebec, on First Nations Policing and Public Safety (FNPPS). The purpose of this meeting was to hear from First Nations police agencies to identify systemic inequalities, gaps in services and other issues that are of concern to the agencies. Further, this meeting facilitated discussions on how the AFN can advocate at the national level on First Nations safety priorities. Public Safety Canada provided a discussion on the FNPPS announcement and negotiations of FNPPS agreements. Participants were able to voice concerns and provided feedback on short, mid and long-term goals for both the AFN and Public Safety Canada.

g) Cannabis

The AFN continues to monitor Bill C-45, which will legalize and regulate the sale, distribution and taxation of cannabis for recreational use in Canada. The legislation is set to come into force in early fall of 2018. The work of the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector is to support First Nations consideration, engagement, and dialogue in relation to the introduction of Cannabis legislation in Canada and the needs of First Nations. Importantly, there is a need to respect and support First Nations authority and jurisdiction of activities that take place in their First Nation.

A national AFN Working Group on Cannabis has been established which includes Regional Chief Isadore

Day and Regional Chief Ghislain Picard, as well as representatives from the AFN's Youth Council, Women's Council and Elders Council. Further, the group includes representatives from a First Nations Health Agency and a First Nations Police Agency. On June 8, 2018, the working group had their inaugural meeting that began coordinating dialogue and engagement with First Nations to better consider implications related to the legalization of cannabis.

h) Nuclear Waste

In June of 2017, responsibility of the nuclear waste management file was transferred from the Implementing Rights Sector to the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector of the AFN. Throughout 2017, the Legal Affairs and Justice Sector has conducted research and drafted discussion papers related to nuclear waste. The AFN recognizes that First Nations governments require information regarding nuclear waste.

The first area of research was in relation to how First Nations laws and processes can be utilized to improve the environment assessment process. Of concern is the fact that *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012 (CEAA 2012)* has reduced the scope of projects, which has reduced the number of projects being assessed and the ability of First Nations to participate in assessments. Nevertheless, in order for culturally-appropriate environmental assessments to occur, a holistic approach as favoured by Indigenous peoples must be the foundation of all assessments. Information critical to the project approval process can be gleaned from Indigenous traditional knowledge, which also extends to follow-up and monitoring obligations.

The second area of research focused on potential impacts that Adaptive Phased Management may have on Aboriginal and treaty rights. There is concern that a long-term repository of nuclear waste will impact the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty rights. It is, therefore, vital that consultations foster dialogue between First Nations regarding Adaptive Phased Management.

Finally, the AFN undertook research on the application of Indigenous traditional knowledge, its benefits in Adaptive Phase Management, and protocols relating to its use and disclosure. There is an opportunity for partnerships with Indigenous peoples to utilize Indigenous traditional knowledge and knowledge systems in the design of a long-term nuclear waste repository. The AFN is working towards recommendations on balancing user and provider rights, and protecting innovative ideas in exchange for withholding knowledge from the public domain.

i) Litigation

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector is involved in a number of court actions that are of national interest to First Nations. Litigation is an effective tool in which the AFN seeks to advance the rights, benefits and exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty rights of First Nations. In addition, the AFN participates in litigation where legal issues are of broad public concern.

The AFN has used the law strategically to effect social change. The AFN continues to be heavily involved in legal matters arising from the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The AFN recognizes that not all former students have equal access to the courts and, thus, the AFN has participated in legal action to ensure the former students have access to the full benefits available under the settlement agreement.

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector continues to be involved in the child welfare case now before the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Despite a 2016 ruling that Canada cease discriminating against First Nations children, Canada was slow to comply. The May 26, 2017, Tribunal found that Canada is not yet in full compliance with this Panel's orders. The Tribunal directed the needs of each individual child must be considered and evaluated, including taking into account any needs that stem from historical disadvantage and the lack of on-reserve and/or surrounding services. The AFN is working with Canada on reforming the First Nations Child and Family Services program.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

The Legal Affairs and Justice Sector will continue to pursue positive changes to legislative, policy and common law principles that reflect reconciliation, and the entrenchment of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Further, issues such as racism throughout police services and adequate funding for First Nations policing continue to be important issues for the upcoming year.



Policy & Research Sector: Fiscal Relations

The National Chief and the former Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, Carolyn Bennett, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the Annual General Assembly in July 2016 to develop options on a new fiscal relationship for Chiefs-in-Assembly and Canada to consider.

The Chiefs Committee on Fiscal Relations, chaired by the National Chief, provided oversight and guidance to the work undertaken pursuant to the MOU. Technical working groups conducted research into options and recommendations.

In the fall of 2017, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) provided joint presentations in regional engagement sessions across the country, hearing from hundreds of participants.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Participants' views from the engagement sessions were reflected in the joint report on fiscal relations presented at the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly in December, 2017. Resolution 66/2017, *AFN-Canada Joint Report on Fiscal Relations*, was passed acknowledging receipt of the report and calling for the implementation of the key recommendations from the report. Subsequently, the Government of Canada approved a Memorandum to Cabinet to implement those recommendations.

The key recommendations from the report are as follows:

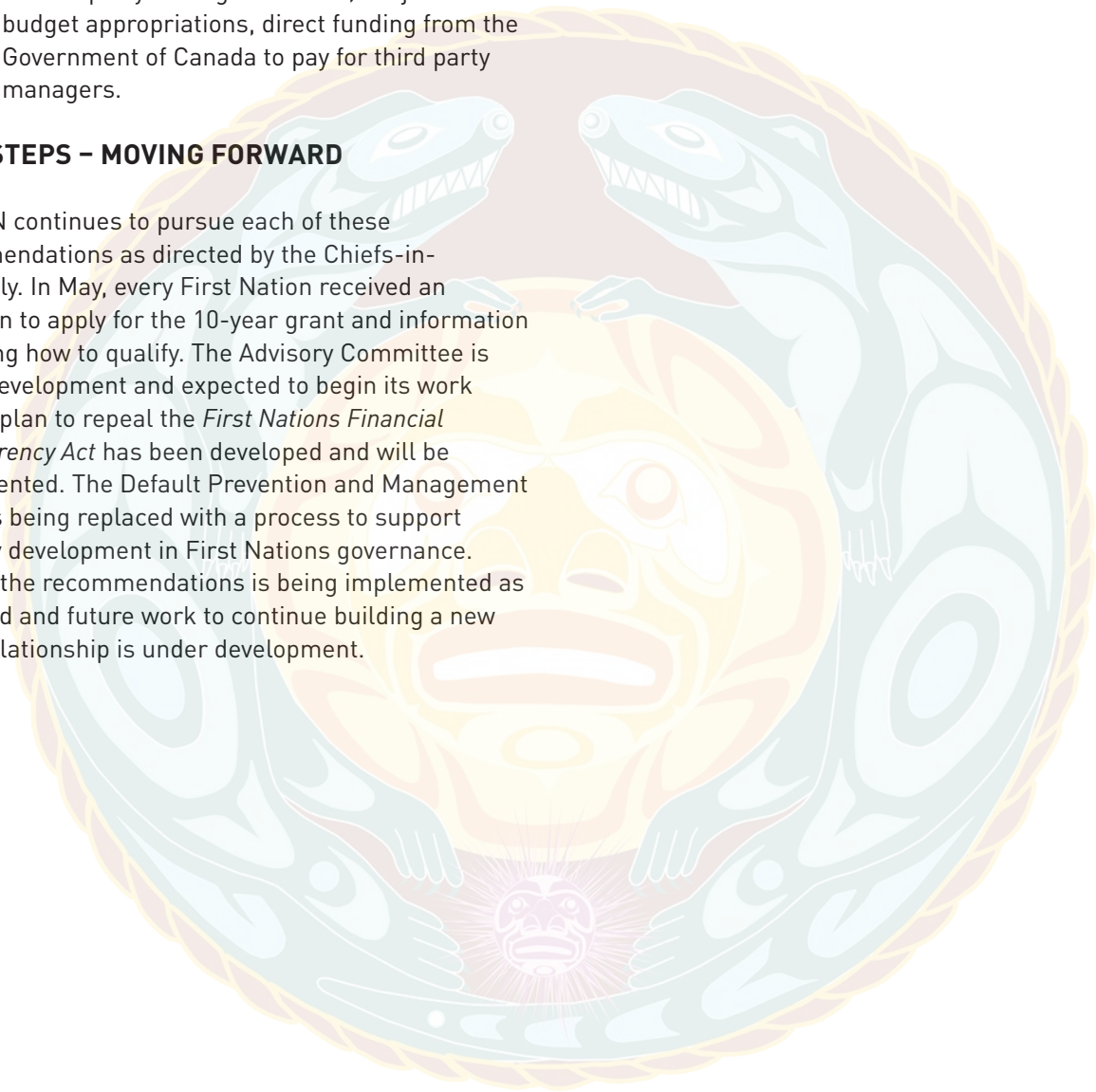
1. The establishment of a permanent advisory committee by April 1, 2019 to provide:
 - a. For a new Fiscal Policy Framework to address sufficiency and identify priority funding areas.
 - b. To increase revenue generation opportunities for First Nations, developed in collaboration with provinces and territories.
 - c. To finalize new funding arrangement policies to strengthen the commitment to flexible and predictable funding, the reduction of reporting burdens and a shift from program to outcome-based reporting, and the elimination of General Assessment Scoring of First Nations in favour of First Nations-led tools.
 - d. To finalize a Mutual Accountability Framework, including a national outcome-based framework based on United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
2. Immediate action to create 10-year grants for qualified First Nations to leverage full flexibility under the Policy on Transfer Payments, to be implemented on or before April 1, 2019 (target 100 First Nations). A plan will be prepared for the orderly preparation and inclusion of additional First Nations over time, based on a co-developed approach between the Government of Canada, the AFN, and First Nation Fiscal Institutions.
3. Immediate steps toward repealing the *First Nations Financial Transparency Act* in 2018 and replacing it with a co-developed mutual accountability framework supported by First Nations Institutions-led audit and statistical functions.
4. Replacement of the Default Prevention and Management Policy with a new proactive approach that includes continued work under

Sector Reports // Policy & Research Sector: Fiscal Relations

the First Nations Financial Management Board pilot project to move First Nations out of third party management and, subject to budget appropriations, direct funding from the Government of Canada to pay for third party managers.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

The AFN continues to pursue each of these recommendations as directed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly. In May, every First Nation received an invitation to apply for the 10-year grant and information regarding how to qualify. The Advisory Committee is under development and expected to begin its work soon. A plan to repeal the *First Nations Financial Transparency Act* has been developed and will be implemented. The Default Prevention and Management Policy is being replaced with a process to support capacity development in First Nations governance. Each of the recommendations is being implemented as approved and future work to continue building a new fiscal relationship is under development.





Policy & Research Sector: International Advocacy

The Chiefs-in-Assembly have directed AFN engagement in international activities and mechanisms to advance First Nations rights. Therefore, the AFN is mandated to pursue 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.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Summit of the Americas

The Summit of the Americas are gatherings of the heads of state and government of the Western Hemisphere where leaders discuss common policy issues, affirm shared values, and commit to national- and regional-level actions to address continuing and new challenges faced in the Americas.

At the Summit of the Americas gathering on April 11–12, 2018 in Lima, Peru the Heads of State of participating nations affirmed their commitment to the full and equal protection of Indigenous peoples in the hemisphere. The Government of Canada was included in this affirmation of support.

At the same time as the summit was convening in Lima, Indigenous leaders from the Americas were holding a parallel American Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) session to ensure their unique interests were represented. The Métis National Council and the AFN were instrumental in organizing and providing support for the Indigenous Summit.

Alberta Regional Chief Marlene Poitras represented the AFN at these events.

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) is an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council with the mandate to deal with Indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health, and human rights. The 17th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues occurred on April 16–27, 2018 at the United Nations Headquarters, New York.

Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild represented the AFN at the event. By virtue of a statement, he recommended that States work in partnership with Indigenous peoples to develop legislative and decision-making processes to ensure respect for their lands, territories, and resources with free, prior and informed consent. He urged States to dismantle colonial laws and end litigation based on denial of Indigenous peoples' rights.

Regional Chief Marlene Poitras delivered closing remarks for the 17th Session of the UNPFII. In her closing remarks she stated that "[o]ur dialogue this year should motivate us in the work that lies ahead in

Sector Reports // Policy & Research Sector: International Advocacy

each region to realize human rights and development for all.”

Universal Periodic Review

Canada’s third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) occurred on May 11, 2018, in Geneva, Switzerland. The Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Canada, Jody Wilson-Raybould, led Canada’s delegation as the first Minister to head Canada’s UPR team.

During Canada’s review, 112 states made interventions recommending Canada address a number of human rights issues. Over 70% of interventions referenced Canada’s obligation to address inequality facing Indigenous peoples, with most comments referring to the protection of Indigenous women and girls. This is in line with previous state interventions through Canada’s first and second UPR.

Minister Wilson-Raybould committed Canada to strengthening intergovernmental collaboration and public dialogue on human rights through development of protocol on recommendations Canada receives from international human rights bodies. Canada also committed to enhanced federal/provincial/territorial human rights implementation through the creation of a senior intergovernmental mechanism.

The Assembly of First Nations provided feedback on Canada’s report and will continue to monitor Canada’s final report due in the fall of 2018.

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) is the body of independent experts that monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination by its state parties.

The 93rd meeting of United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination took place in

Geneva, Switzerland from July 31 – August 25, 2017. Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild delivered a statement on behalf of the National Chief on August 14, 2017 where he highlighted the link between the denial of First Nations’ rights to self-determination (and to benefit from the rich resources of our lands) to the vast socio-economic gap between First Nations and Canadians. Grand Chief Littlechild also highlighted Canada’s commitment to the implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a framework for reconciliation based on recognition of rights and the Assembly of First Nations’ effort to co-develop an Indigenous Languages Act. He concluded his remarks with a call upon the Government of Canada to honour its human rights obligations.

In addition, the AFN wrote and submitted a report to CERD. In response to AFN’s statement and report, CERD recommended that Canada adopt a legislative framework, a national action plan, and to also reform national laws, policies, and regulations to bring them into compliance with the *UN Declaration*.

The Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP) provides the Human Rights Council with expertise and advice on the rights of Indigenous peoples as set out in the *UN Declaration*.

The 11th session of EMRIP occurred in Geneva, Switzerland from July 9–13, 2018 and focused on the theme of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). The Assembly of First Nations was represented by Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild during the event. The AFN contributed a technical paper on FPIC to support the EMRIP study on the subject. The EMRIP study on FPIC will be submitted to the Human Rights Council at its thirty-ninth session in September 2018.

Sector Reports // Policy & Research Sector: International Advocacy

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

The High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level. The HLPF occurred in New York from July 9–18, 2018. Canada gave its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the afternoon of July 17, 2018. Canada's VNR is forward-looking as no substantive work has been accomplished as of yet.

Grand Chief Littlechild represented the Assembly of First Nations at the event and urged for an Indigenous perspective in the implementation of the sustainable development goals such as Indigenous peoples' rights to development, self-determination, free, prior and informed consent and Indigenous traditional knowledge. The AFN also called on Canada to create a more robust and meaningful engagement with First Nations in the implementation of Agenda 2030 to ensure that the process will use, in collaboration with Indigenous peoples, a means to measure the gap in the quality of life between First Nations people and Canada.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- The AFN will participate in the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity taking place from November 17–29, 2018 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.
- The AFN will continue to monitor and hold the Government of Canada accountable to honour its human rights obligations and the rights and interests of First Nations, internationally.



Policy & Research Sector: National Advocacy

The AFN continues to advance the rights and interests of First Nations through building relationships and partnerships with federal, provincial and territorial governments in order to inform policy approaches and objectives which affect First Nations.

A key advocacy activity the AFN undertakes nationally is federal budget advocacy. The AFN coordinates and submits a federal pre-budget submission annually to the Standing Committee on Finance. Through this process the AFN advocates for sufficient funding and to close the socio-economic gaps between First Nations citizens and other Canadians. Significantly, the last three federal budgets have invested an additional \$16.6 billion over seven years into First Nations programs and services. Nonetheless, there is much more work to do and the AFN continues its annual efforts to influence the Government of Canada's budget commitments.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Access to Federal Decision Makers

Prime Minister Trudeau has addressed Chiefs-in-Assembly on three occasions since 2015. In December 2017, the AFN hosted a parliamentary reception to facilitate First Nations access to Parliamentarians and key decision-makers. In order to maintain First Nations access to Parliamentarians and key decision-makers, AFN Assemblies and AFN Executive meetings regularly feature involvement from senior Cabinet Ministers and Officials.

Advocacy on Key Legislative Priorities

As a result of First Nations advocacy, the House of Commons passed Bill C-262, *An Act to Implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous*

Peoples on May 30, 2018. National Chief Perry Bellegarde has written to Parliamentarians and Senators seven times since 2015 requesting their support for the *UN Declaration*.

In the past year, political representatives and secretariat staff made presentations to the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities in addition to written submissions to both the House of Commons and the Senate. Submissions and appearances are available at <http://www.parl.ca/>.

The AFN provides timely information to First Nations on the activities of Parliament, including legislative and committee business. To accomplish this, the AFN conducts extensive federal parliamentary monitoring and analysis on matters which have direct impact on First Nations. Priorities in these areas include, but are not limited to, Indigenous languages revitalization, the justice system, First Nation veteran's affairs and implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

Canada-AFN Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

It has been one year since the signing of the Assembly of First Nations-Canada Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities (MOU). The MOU calls for regular meetings to discuss key issues and assess progress on shared priorities and is not a decision-making forum. The third meeting under the MOU took place March 26, 2018 with cabinet ministers and parliamentary secretaries in attendance. The meeting served as an opportunity to discuss the 2018 federal budget commitments, hear updates on joint

Sector Reports // Policy & Research Sector: National Advocacy

work to close the socio-economic gap, and discuss the recently announced Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework. The next meeting under the MOU will take place in Fall 2018.

Implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

The AFN continues to monitor federal, provincial and territorial progress on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. The AFN is actively engaged in advancing 33 of the 94 Calls to Action of the TRC. The AFN has partnered with Indigenous Watchdog, an Indigenous-led organization, to analyze the federal government's progress on implementing the Calls to Action and is working with First Nations leadership and technicians, in partnership with the Government of Canada, to co-develop initiatives that address the Calls to Action. This includes reforms to First Nations Child Welfare, Indigenous Languages Legislation, amendments to the Citizenship Guide, and the Oath of Citizenship, as well as a national action plan to implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. In the coming months, the AFN will develop a public awareness strategy to educate and promote reconciliation.

Intergovernmental Relations

The AFN continues to advocate for full and meaningful participation in federal-provincial-territorial intergovernmental tables after declining attendance at the 2017 Council of the Federation meeting. The AFN will continue to encourage an effective process for intergovernmental participation that must reflect our status under the *Constitution* and international law as peoples and nations with inherent rights, title and jurisdiction.

National Indigenous Peoples Space - 100 Wellington Street

On June 21, 2017 Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the future of the former U.S. Embassy in Ottawa as a space for Indigenous peoples, with its

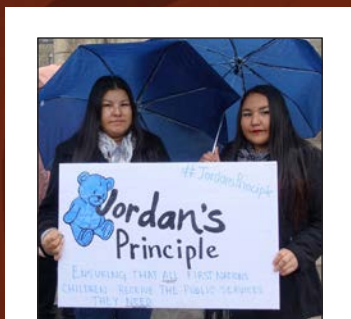
function and use to be determined in partnership by the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), and the Métis National Council (MNC). The site is located at 100 Wellington Street—directly across from the Parliament Buildings, and on the traditional territory of the Algonquin Nation.

The project has been guided by Resolution 29/2017 which gives the AFN a mandate to initiate a process to determine the most effective use of 100 Wellington Street. The Chiefs-in-Assembly also directed the AFN to work with Algonquin First Nations to ensure the process includes the appropriate protocols necessary and the assurance of significant Algonquin involvement.

The Assembly of First Nations will continue working with ITK, MNC and Canada to ensure a future National Indigenous Peoples Space showcases First Nations cultures and histories while educating Canadians and visitors in order to promote reconciliation.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- Maintain First Nations access to Parliamentarians and key decision-makers;
- Advocate on key legislative priorities to Members of Parliament and Senators;
- Continue to monitor and provide timely information to First Nations on the activities of Parliament, including legislative and committee business;
- Advance the priorities of the Chiefs-in-Assembly through the Memorandum of Understanding in Fall and Winter 2018;
- Continue to advocate for concrete actions to address the TRC's Calls to Action and report on progress to the AFN Executive Committee and Chiefs-in-Assembly;
- Continue to advocate for First Nations inclusion at intergovernmental forums in order to advance First Nations rights and interests;
- Continue to engage with First Nations to determine the future of 100 Wellington Street as a National Indigenous Peoples Space.



Social Development Sector

The AFN Social Development Sector seeks to create healthy, safe and sustainable First Nations through an inclusive, holistic and culturally-based social development system that promotes First Nations control and jurisdiction. Key areas of work include Child and Family Services, Jordan's Principle, Early Learning and Child Care, Income Assistance, poverty reduction, and family violence prevention. The work of the Social Development Sector is driven by a vision of an ongoing partnership between First Nations and the federal, provincial and territorial governments to ensure a continuum of high quality and culturally-relevant services, and a comprehensive, integrated approach to social development that includes capacity development at the community level to promote local control and jurisdiction over key services for First Nations.

Resolution 92/2017, *Support the Spirit Bear Plan to End Inequities in all Federally Funded Public Services for First Nations Children, Youth and Families*, best captures the overall spirit of the Social Development Sector's ongoing efforts. Passed at the December 2017 Special Chiefs Assembly, this resolution calls for immediate compliance with the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal's orders regarding Child and Family Services reform, for equity in funding for all public services for First Nations children, youth, and families, and to ensure all discriminatory policies and practices embedded in government departments serving First Nations children, youth, and families end.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Child and Family Services and Jordan's Principle

The AFN Social Development Sector continues to advocate for First Nations children and works with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada

(Caring Society), along with regional and community partners, to create meaningful change on this front.

As per the February 1, 2018 ruling (2018 CHRT 4), the AFN Social Development Sector has worked to establish a Consultation Protocol (executed on March 2, 2018) and established the Consultation Committee on First Nations Child Welfare (CCCW). The CCCW will oversee the development and implementation of immediate relief measures as ordered by the Tribunal's orders. The AFN sits on the CCCW along with representatives from the Parties to the Tribunal (Canada, by way of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), Caring Society, Chiefs of Ontario (COO), Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and the Canadian Human Rights Commission).

As called for by AFN Resolution 62/2016, *Full and Proper Implementation of the historic Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decisions in the provision for child welfare services and Jordan's Principle*, the Social Development Sector has re-established and continues working with the National Advisory Committee on First Nations Child and Family Services (NAC) to oversee recommendations for reform related to the Tribunal decisions, including implementing Jordan's Principle. The NAC has five Action Tables dedicated to the following areas: Practice and Community Needs; Agency and Administration; Governance and Legislation; Jordan's Principle; and Internal ISC/Government of Canada Reform, Training, Education and Communication.

The Action Tables of the NAC have convened several times to carry out their respective work plans. NAC members attended the Emergency Meeting on Indigenous Child Welfare, called for by the Minister of Indigenous Services, the Honourable Jane Philpott, on January 25–26, 2018. The NAC released an Interim

Report of recommendations based on each Action Table focus area in January 2018. The NAC is continuing to fulfil its mandate, which is extended to March 31, 2019.

The Jordan's Principle Action Table has convened on a monthly basis since June 2017. The primary objective of the Action Table is to co-develop short- and long-term engagement approaches and policy options for Jordan's Principle. The Jordan's Principle Action Table has developed a phased approach to engagement on Jordan's Principle, and is continuing its work throughout 2018 and 2019.

The Agency and Administration Action Table of the NAC has convened several times throughout 2017-18 to advance the work of the NAC related to understanding and costing agency needs. The Agency and Administration Action Table has partnered with the Institute for Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD) at the University of Ottawa to undertake this work and to analyze the needs assessments completed by First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies across the country. This partnership is ongoing and has extended into the work of the NAC to support the costing of all needs and prevention services and activities for Agencies.

AFN Resolution 40/2017, *Call on Canada to Comply with the 2016 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Orders*, called for Canada's compliance with the 2016 Tribunal ruling and its subsequent orders. It further directed the AFN to organize a National Day of Action on First Nations Child Welfare, which was held on November 2, 2017 on unceded Algonquin Territory on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario. National Chief Perry Bellegarde, the Honourable Jane Philpott, family members of the late Jordan River Anderson, students from Ottawa-area schools, and members of the public gathered to call for action on child and family services.

AFN Resolution 11/2018, *Federal Legislation on First Nations Child Welfare Jurisdiction*, directs the AFN to endorse a working group comprised of representation from nations, without question, and the National

Advisory Committee (NAC) on First Nations Child and Family Services Program Reform. The purpose of the working group is to study and develop viable options for federal legislation on First Nations Child Welfare. Letters have gone out to all Regional Chiefs seeking the appointment of a representative from their region to participate in the working group. A Concept Paper on First Nations Child and Family Services Jurisdiction was funded by the AFN and discussed in dialogue sessions at the Special Chiefs Assembly on May 2, 2018 in Gatineau, Quebec.

Early Learning and Child Care

The AFN National Expert Working Group on First Nations Early Learning and Child Care (NEWG ELCC) was formed as a result of AFN Resolution 39/2016, *First Nations National Working Group on Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC)*. The NEWG ELCC has spent much of 2017-18 guiding regional engagement processes to identify and confirm key principles, priorities and actions for a First Nations ELCC Framework.

The First Nations ELCC Framework was completed based on the regional engagements, and was endorsed by Chiefs-in-Assembly by way of AFN Resolution 83/2017, *Support for the National First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Policy Framework*. The First Nations ELCC Framework honours the diversity and integrity of current approaches to First Nations ELCC. The Framework highlights the need for a high quality, child- and family-centered, flexible and well-coordinated First Nations ELCC system that enables local governance, the inclusion of Indigenous cultures, languages and values, collaboration, partnerships, capacity development, and that is transparent and accountable. The First Nations ELCC Framework has been used to support the development of a National Indigenous ELCC (NIELCC) Framework, which is anticipated to be released in early summer of 2018. The NEWG ELCC will continue its work to support regional determination and implementation of the NIELCC and First Nation ELCC Framework components.

Income Assistance

The AFN Social Development Sector continues to build upon the work of previous years in the area of Income Assistance. The Sector has worked to establish an AFN Technical Working Group on Social Development, with an initial focus on the development and implementation of a reformed On-Reserve Income Assistance Data Collection Instrument (DCI).

Additionally, the Technical Working Group supported the planning and hosting of a National Forum on First Nations Income Assistance. The Forum was held on February 27–28, 2018 in Ottawa, and brought together over 130 participants from nearly 40 organizations across the country to share best practices, objectives and suggestions for the pre-employment supports moving forward, and to learn new skills through workshops.

Poverty Reduction

The AFN received funding from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) through their initiative to develop a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS). The funding was used to support the completion of a literature review of the existing and ongoing AFN-led engagement materials to understand a First Nations approach to poverty, and what poverty reduction entails. The review found that, for First Nations, poverty is multidimensional and intrinsically linked to colonialism and trauma. The AFN submitted its findings to ESDC for consideration and inclusion in its reporting on the PRS.

Sports

The Social Development Sector continues to support First Nations in their pursuits to participate and/or host major sporting events in North America. Resolution 106/2016: *North American Indigenous Games Residency Rule*, Resolution 108/2016: *Support for the Toronto 2017 North American Indigenous Games Host Society's #88 Campaign*, and Resolution 96/2017: *Support Six Nations of the Grand River's Intent to Host the 2020 North*

American Indigenous Games (NAIG) all speak to this mandate. Resolution 82/2017: *Support the Inclusion of Lacrosse as a Sport in the Canada Summer Games* was also supported by the Social Development Sector, with a letter of support for the inclusion of lacrosse in the Canada Summer Games.

NEXT STEPS – MOVING FORWARD

- The Social Development Sector will continue working with the NAC and its Action Tables, along with the CCCW, to advance the work towards reform of the on-reserve Child and Family Services Program. The AFN Social Development Sector, in partnership with the Jordan's Principle Action Table, has sought financial support for and is planning a Jordan's Principle Summit to take place in fall 2018 to bring together families, service providers, practitioners, and leadership to discuss and share information on Jordan's Principle.
- The Social Development Sector will continue moving forward with the establishment of a working group to study and develop viable options for federal legislation on First Nations Child Welfare per Resolution 11/2018.
- The Social Development Sector will continue supporting the NEWG ELCC to assist with the regional implementation of the anticipated NIELCC Framework, and will continue to advocate for the work on First Nations ELCC happening across the country.
- The Social Development Sector will continue supporting the Technical Working Group on Social Development and its work related to the On-Reserve Income Assistance program. This group will eventually expand to support work in areas such as Assisted Living and Family Violence Prevention.
- The Social Development Sector will continue to advocate for First Nations' priorities in the development of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.



Financial Statements

Financial statements of National Indian Brotherhood

March 31, 2018

Independent Auditor's Report	1
Statement of operations.....	2
Statement of financial position	3
Statement of changes in net assets	4
Statement of cash flows	5
Notes to the financial statements	6–11
Schedules – Statements of operations	
Schedule A – Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	12–14
Schedule B – Other funding agencies	15–17



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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Executive Committee of
National Indian Brotherhood

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of National Indian Brotherhood, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2018, and the 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 Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these 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 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 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 financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the 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 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 financial statements.

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 financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of National Indian Brotherhood as at March 31, 2018, 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.

Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

July 22, 2018

National Indian Brotherhood

Statement of operations

Year ended March 31, 2018

	Schedules	2018	2017
		\$	\$
Revenue			
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	A	23,203,552	15,512,540
Health Canada	B	3,012,773	4,065,772
Employment and Social Development Canada	B	1,060,330	1,058,946
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	B	730,405	571,166
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency	B	500,000	233,200
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	B	435,141	140,853
Environment and Climate Change Canada	B	316,465	140,000
Public Safety Canada	B	197,125	—
Agriculture Canada	B	154,221	—
Parks Canada	B	150,000	—
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation	B	120,010	405,475
Natural Resources Canada	B	119,827	—
University of Ottawa	B	46,951	—
Canadian Partnership Against Cancer	B	—	129,896
Other departments	B	2,030,235	1,630,861
		32,077,035	23,888,709
Expenses			
Advertising, promotion and publications		93,068	55,701
Amortization of capital assets		99,400	38,164
Insurance		27,675	24,524
Miscellaneous		10,379	2,254
Office expenses		1,122,490	1,317,940
Professional fees		5,009,233	5,557,999
Regional service delivery		3,070,078	1,498,216
Rent		1,022,029	820,507
Salaries and benefits		11,157,744	7,765,222
Travel and meetings		9,698,232	6,587,069
		31,310,328	23,667,596
Excess of revenue over expenses		766,707	221,113

The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of the financial statements

National Indian Brotherhood
Statement of financial position
As at March 31, 2018

	Notes	2018 \$	2017 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash		4,476,552	831,678
Asset held in trust	3	15,281	15,281
Grants and contributions receivable	4	1,884,020	1,401,145
Other accounts receivable		247,672	450,140
Due from Trust Fund		57,880	90,635
Goods and services tax/ harmonized sales tax recoverable		652,935	871,245
Inventory		182,526	116,399
Prepaid expenses		143,087	180,097
		7,659,953	3,956,620
Prepaid expenses		305,488	378,805
Capital assets	5	293,354	314,765
		8,258,795	4,650,190
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		6,068,054	4,450,227
Government remittances payable		169,030	125,953
Liability held in trust	3	15,281	15,281
Deferred contributions	6	1,028,542	495,421
Excess contributions	7	761,595	17,722
Current portion of long-term debt	8	96,000	96,000
		8,138,502	5,200,604
Long-term debt	8	80,000	176,000
		8,218,502	5,376,604
Contingencies and commitments	9 and 10		
Net assets (deficit)			
Invested in capital assets		293,354	314,765
Unrestricted deficiency		(253,061)	(1,041,179)
		40,293	(726,414)
		8,258,795	4,650,190

The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of the financial statements

On behalf of the Executive Committee

_____, Perry Bellegarde, National Chief

_____, Roger Augustine, Regional Chief, Management Committee

National Indian Brotherhood

Statement of changes in net assets

Year ended March 31, 2018

	Invested in capital assets	Unrestricted deficiency – general operations	2018 Total	2017 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Net assets (deficit), beginning of year	314,765	(1,041,179)	(726,414)	(947,527)
Excess of revenue over expenses	—	766,707	766,707	221,113
Acquisition of capital assets	77,989	(77,989)	—	—
Amortization of capital assets	(99,400)	99,400	—	—
Net assets (deficit), end of year	293,354	(253,061)	40,293	(726,414)

The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of the financial statements

National Indian Brotherhood

Statement of cash flows

Year ended March 31, 2018

	Notes	2018 \$	2017 \$
Operating activities			
Excess of revenue over expenses		766,707	221,113
Items not affecting cash			
Amortization of capital assets		99,400	38,164
Increase in deferred contributions		533,121	303,938
Increase (decrease) in excess contributions		743,873	(517,611)
		2,143,101	45,604
Changes in non-cash operating working capital items	11	1,643,007	1,396,711
		3,786,108	1,442,315
Investing activities			
Increase in due from Trust Fund		32,755	(50,888)
Acquisition of capital assets		(77,989)	(212,893)
		(45,234)	(263,781)
Financing activities			
Net change in bank loan		—	(253,117)
Repayment of long-term debt		(96,000)	(96,000)
		(96,000)	(349,117)
Net increase in cash		3,644,874	829,417
Cash, beginning of year		831,678	2,261
Cash, end of year		4,476,552	831,678

The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of the financial statements

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements
March 31, 2018

1. Description of the organization

National Indian Brotherhood (the "Corporation") was incorporated under Part II of the *Canada Corporations Act* on September 29, 1970. In June 2014, the Corporation received a certificate of continuance under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*. The Corporation has 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. Significant accounting policies

The 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 presentation

The financial statements do not include the accounts of those of the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund (the "Trust Fund"), which is controlled by the Corporation. Summarized financial statements of the Trust Fund are disclosed in Note 12 of the financial statements.

Revenue recognition

The Corporation follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions.

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 revenue on the same basis as the related depreciable capital assets are amortized.

Financial instruments

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

2. Significant accounting policies (continued)

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

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 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 financial statements and the accompanying notes. In the opinion of management, these 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, the amount of inventory reserves, the useful life of capital assets, the amount of accrued liabilities and the allocation of expenses.

3. Asset held in trust

The Corporation is holding in trust an education fund totalling \$15,281 (\$15,281 in 2017) for Kelly Morrisseau's children. These funds were donated by individuals and organizations.

4. Grants and contributions receivable

Grants and contributions receivable are as follows:

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency	500,000	233,200
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	437,640	342,772
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	339,079	141,166
Employment and Social Development Canada	222,280	444,007
Environment and Climate Change Canada	218,541	140,000
Agriculture Canada	154,221	—
Health Canada	12,259	—
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	—	100,000
	1,884,020	1,401,145

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements
 March 31, 2018

5. Capital assets

	2018		2017
	Cost	Accumulated amortization	Net book value
	\$	\$	\$
Computer equipment	128,552	73,725	54,827
Office equipment	276,942	151,385	125,557
Leasehold improvements	232,415	119,445	112,970
	637,909	344,555	293,354
			314,765

6. Deferred contributions

Changes in the deferred contributions balance are as follows:

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Balance, beginning of year	495,421	191,483
Contributions received during the year	32,610,156	24,192,647
Contributions recognized as revenue during the year	(32,077,035)	(23,888,709)
Balance, end of year	1,028,542	495,421

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

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Health Canada	923,172	460,280
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	98,144	—
University of Ottawa	5,294	—
Special Chiefs Assembly	1,932	—
Nuclear Waste Management Organization	—	35,141
	1,028,542	495,421

7. Excess contributions

Excess contributions are as follows:

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada	706,039	17,722
Public Safety Canada	55,556	—
	761,595	17,722

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements
 March 31, 2018

8. Long-term debt

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%
 Current portion

2018	2017
\$	\$
176,000	272,000
96,000	96,000
80,000	176,000

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

	\$
2019	96,000
2020	80,000

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 (nil in 2017).

9. Contingencies

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 its allocations of expenses are fair and appropriate in the circumstances. Adjustments to the financial statements as a result of these reviews, if any, will be recorded in the period in which they become known.

10. 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:

2019	1,264,964
2020	1,276,571
2021	1,222,626
2022	1,209,449
2023 and thereafter	1,165,629
	<u>6,139,239</u>

National Indian Brotherhood
Notes to the financial statements
 March 31, 2018

11. Changes in non-cash operating working capital items

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Grants and contributions receivable	(482,875)	(450,698)
Other accounts receivable	202,468	29,771
Goods and services tax/harmonized sales tax recoverable	218,310	(630,346)
Inventory	(66,125)	(84,635)
Prepaid expenses	110,327	(11,393)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,617,827	2,588,480
Government remittances payable	43,077	(44,468)
	1,643,009	1,396,711

12. Controlled entity

The Corporation appoints the Trustees of the National Indian Brotherhood Trust Fund (the "Trust Fund"), a registered charity under paragraph 149(l)(f) of the *Income Tax Act*, to administer the Language and Literacy Fund, the Youth Healing Fund, the Research Sponsor Fund, the Heroes of Our Time Fund, the Education Fund, the Métis Fund, and the Education Legacy Fund. The Trust Fund is deemed a non-profit organization under the *Income Tax Act* (Canada), and accordingly, is not subject to income taxes.

The summarized financial statements of the Trust Fund are as follows:

Summarized statement of financial position

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Assets	146,002,967	151,266,206
Liabilities	1,369,076	615,684
Fund balances	144,633,891	150,650,522
	146,002,967	151,266,206

Summarized statement of operations

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Revenue	5,041,353	6,775,793
Expenses	11,057,984	9,916,881
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(6,016,631)	(3,141,088)

13. Executive salaries

By virtue of an annual general assembly resolution (62/98), the National Chief of the 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.

National Indian Brotherhood Notes to the financial statements

March 31, 2018

14. Pension plan

The Corporation contributes to a defined contribution pension plan for its employees and Regional Chiefs. Contributions are up to 8% of an employee's salary. The employer's contributions for the year were \$573,305 (\$400,929 in 2017).

15. Financial instruments

Fair value

The fair value of the 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, 2018 and March 31, 2017, approximates its carrying value.

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 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. Consequently, the cash flow exposure is not significant.

Interest rate risk (continued)

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
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2018

Schedule A – Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

	Basic Organizational Capacity	Reserve	Bill S-3 Consultation on the Collaborative Design	Building a Vision for 100 Wellington Protect	Core Like	Emergency Management Capacity Development in First Nations	Engagement Session on Border Crossing Issues	First Nations and Trade	Income Assistance DCI Working Group and Income Assistance Pre-employment National Meeting	Supporting Children and Families
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue										
Contributions/grants	5,545,726	230,000	100,000	192,050	3,500,000	91,536	21,589	300,000	298,038	997,608
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	5,545,726	230,000	100,000	192,050	3,500,000	91,536	21,589	300,000	298,038	997,608
Expenses										
Advertising, promotion and publications	16,193	795	—	739	3,075	639	—	797	899	1,098
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	—	13,043	13,064	—	—	—	—	5,723	—
Insurance	6,481	61	—	87	3,498	—	—	439	—	910
Miscellaneous	707	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	383,590	15,736	—	9,845	95,047	4,888	1,315	14,503	11,543	47,468
Professional fees	83,087	30,839	86,632	58,975	754,493	2,178	10,500	28,513	16,080	138,504
Regional service delivery	1,413,696	—	—	—	611,360	—	—	—	—	—
Rent	254,060	3,387	—	11,812	81,852	—	—	17,184	—	36,152
Salaries and benefits	2,849,996	63,240	—	69,015	1,091,815	76,451	—	191,137	—	483,386
Travel and meetings	541,090	115,942	438	28,545	859,550	7,380	9,774	47,457	263,793	290,308
	5,548,900	230,000	100,113	192,082	3,500,690	91,536	21,589	300,030	298,038	997,826
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(3,174)	—	(113)	(32)	(690)	—	—	(30)	—	(218)

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
 Year ended March 31, 2018

Schedule A – Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (continued)

	Operations Maintenance Policy Review	Indigenous Presenters - Canadian Risk and Hazard Network	Indigenous Languages Recognition, Recovery and Revitalization	Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Energy and Climate Change	Permanent Bilateral Mechanism Process Project	Joint Research - New Fiscal Relationships	New Paths for Education	First Nations Led Federal Comprehensive Review of PSE
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue								
Contributions/grants	106,060	55,000	1,700,000	2,500,000	2,401,856	20,000	225,000	699,999
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	106,060	55,000	1,700,000	2,500,000	2,401,856	20,000	225,000	699,999
Expenses								
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	—	1,010	1,569	354	—	—	—
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	5,000	—	—	218,350	—	—	67,839
Insurance	—	—	493	1,352	1,888	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	—	—	43,002	59,784	114,544	—	1,592	—
Professional fees	49,017	—	584,448	200,274	769,360	20,000	97,560	160,111
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	950,000	43,519	—	—	—
Rent	—	—	40,352	64,202	82,193	—	—	—
Salaries and benefits	—	—	262,154	429,901	632,073	—	—	—
Travel and meetings	57,043	50,000	769,054	792,924	539,575	—	126,500	472,099
	106,060	55,000	1,700,513	2,500,006	2,401,856	20,000	225,652	700,049
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	—	—	(513)	(6)	—	—	(652)	(50)

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
Year ended March 31, 2018

Schedule A – Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (continued)

	First Nations Education Transformation	Housing and Infrastructure/ Emergency Management Network	TRANSCAN Support Review ENV/REG Processes	DFOCAN Support Review ENV/REG Processes	NRCAN Support Review ENV/REG Processes	UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Symposium	YouthBuild Discovery Tour Project	2018 Total	2017 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue									
Contributions/grants	1,300,000	1,965,890	50,000	50,000	133,200	680,000	15,000	23,203,552	14,726,064
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15,598
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	758,558
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12,320
	1,300,000	1,965,890	50,000	50,000	133,200	680,000	15,000	23,203,552	15,512,540
Expenses									
Advertising, promotion and publications	1,787	8,586	—	—	54	996	—	38,591	33,855
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	13,188	—	—	12,000	45,000	—	393,207	72,034
Insurance	—	1,084	—	—	196	733	—	17,222	12,833
Miscellaneous	—	113	—	—	—	—	—	820	1,804
Office expenses	72,482	54,020	—	—	2,374	32,047	—	963,780	791,250
Professional fees	3,468	296,414	—	—	26,409	155,676	—	3,572,538	3,207,989
Regional service delivery	—	5,124	—	—	—	—	—	3,023,699	1,391,498
Rent	90,700	48,390	—	—	3,505	28,748	—	761,937	520,300
Salaries and benefits	750,740	652,821	—	—	29,324	199,120	—	7,781,173	5,118,623
Travel and meetings	381,074	886,150	50,000	50,000	59,343	218,288	15,000	6,656,327	4,392,329
	1,300,251	1,965,890	50,000	50,000	133,205	680,008	15,000	23,209,294	15,542,515
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(251)	—	—	—	(5)	(8)	—	(5,742)	(29,975)

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
 Year ended March 31, 2018

Schedule B – Other funding agencies

	Health Canada - First Nations Capacity Building for the Chemicals Management Plan	Employment and Social Development Canada	Fisheries and Oceans Canada - AAROM	Fisheries and Oceans Canada - Management	Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency Review of Environmental Processes	Nuclear Waste Management Organization - Foster Positive Dialogue
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue						
Contributions/grants	2,530,130	22,103	1,060,330	680,056	500,000	435,141
Contributions/grants - prior years	460,280	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	260	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
	2,990,670	22,103	1,060,330	680,056	500,000	435,141
Expenses						
Advertising, promotion and publications	2,218	17	474	495	809	1,081
Allocation of administrative expenses	271,817	—	—	34,639	43,700	18,389
Amortization of capital assets	11,179	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	3,024	—	741	932	—	740
Miscellaneous	282	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	122,359	2,779	32,501	18,018	6,917	33,304
Professional fees	374,805	—	402,349	10,317	187,099	27,375
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rent	127,769	—	26,915	34,914	—	36,792
Salaries and benefits	1,108,507	16,984	286,308	270,756	193,445	274,695
Travel and meetings	969,022	2,330	312,040	310,120	68,228	42,768
	2,990,982	22,110	1,061,328	680,191	500,198	435,144
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(312)	(7)	(998)	(135)	(198)	(3)

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
 Year ended March 31, 2018

Schedule B – Other funding agencies

	Environment and Climate Change Canada - First Nations Species at Risk Advisory Committee	Environment and Climate Change Canada - Biodiversity Wildlife and Habitat	Public Safety Canada - Permanent Bilateral Mechanism Policing and Community Safety Priority	Public Safety Canada - Creating Awareness for First Nations Emergency Management	Agriculture Canada - First Nations Agriculture Strategy and Food Policy Development Framework	Parks Canada
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue						
Contributions/grants	218,541	97,924	187,681	9,444	154,221	150,000
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	—	—
	218,541	97,924	187,681	9,444	154,221	150,000
Expenses						
Advertising, promotion and publications	216	8	2,525	570	100	626
Allocation of administrative expenses	—	13,027	24,480	—	10,693	1,298
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance	212	—	—	—	87	10
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office expenses	15,685	3,147	8,820	3,952	4,109	2,138
Professional fees	32,019	1,500	2,624	—	12,341	75,641
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rent	13,568	—	—	468	5,345	6,776
Salaries and benefits	106,079	68,456	100,279	4,314	67,564	41,739
Travel and meetings	50,782	11,786	48,960	140	54,603	21,896
	218,561	97,924	187,688	9,444	154,842	150,124
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(20)	—	(7)	—	(621)	(124)

National Indian Brotherhood
Schedules - Statement of operations
 Year ended March 31, 2018

Schedule B – Other funding agencies

	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation	Natural Resources Canada - First Nations Dialogue on Generation Energy Processes	Natural Resources Canada - Indigenous Engagement Strategy Collaborative Decision Making Research	University of Ottawa - First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study	Other	2018 Total	2017 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue							
Contributions/grants	—	94,827	25,000	46,951	—	6,262,698	6,840,791
Contributions/grants - prior years	—	—	—	—	—	460,280	115,489
Miscellaneous	120,010	—	—	—	783,484	903,754	893,740
Registration fees	—	—	—	—	999,445	999,445	317,322
Trade show fees	—	—	—	—	247,306	247,306	208,827
	120,010	94,827	25,000	46,951	2,030,235	8,873,483	8,376,169
Expenses							
Advertising, promotion and publications	—	—	—	—	45,338	54,477	21,846
Allocation of administrative expenses	2,610	12,383	3,750	4,750	(841,343)	(393,207)	(72,034)
Amortization of capital assets	—	—	—	—	88,221	99,400	38,164
Insurance	—	—	—	—	4,707	10,453	11,691
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	9,277	9,559	450
Office expenses	39	807	—	48	(95,913)	158,710	526,690
Professional fees	711	39,024	13,224	—	255,166	1,436,695	2,350,010
Regional service delivery	—	—	—	—	46,379	46,379	106,718
Rent	—	2,400	—	—	5,145	260,092	300,207
Salaries and benefits	—	—	5,524	40,251	791,670	3,376,571	2,646,599
Travel and meetings	37,473	40,227	3,127	1,902	1,025,252	3,041,905	2,194,740
	40,833	94,841	25,625	46,951	1,333,899	8,101,034	8,125,081
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	79,177	(14)	(625)	—	696,336	772,449	251,088



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