
Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
July 24, 25 & 26, 2018, VANCOUVER, BC

Resolution no. 38/2018

TITLE: Ensuring Accessibility at the Assembly of First Nations

SUBJECT: Accessibility, Disabilities

MOVED BY: Chief R. Donald Maracle, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation, ON

SECONDED BY: Chief Jessica Hill, Oneida Nation of the Thames, ON

DECISION: Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:
- i. Article 21 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
 - ii. Article 21 (2): States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.
- B. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states:
- i. Article 21 (b): Accepting and facilitating the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions.
 - ii. Article 21 (e): Recognizing and promoting the use of sign languages.
 - iii. Article 27: States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who

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38 – 2018
Page 1 of 3

Head Office/Siège Social

acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia.

- iv. Article 30 (4): Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture.
- C. Recent Assembly of First Nations (AFN) resolutions on disabilities and accessibility include: Resolution 10/2018, *Resources for Engagements on Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation*, Resolution 98/2017, *Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation*, Resolution 105/2016, *Establish an Office of Disabilities Unit at the AFN and develop a Regional Advisory Disability Task Force*, Resolution 55/2016, *First Nations Federal Accessibility Legislation*; Resolution 75/2015, *Support the Economic, Social and Cultural, Spiritual, Civil and Political Rights of Indigenous Persons with Disabilities*; and Resolution 48/2014, *Support for Persons with Disabilities*.
- D. First Nation with disabilities are experiencing a lack of accessibility to meetings, events, and opportunities, which is compounded by historical impacts of colonization, assimilation, residential schools, and intergenerational trauma.
- E. The AFN has conducted engagement pertaining to the new Federal Accessibility legislation, finding significant accessibility barriers for First Nations peoples at the community level and beyond.
- F. Resolving accessibility barriers for First Nations requires a culturally-relevant and holistic approach as well as efforts to ensure all First Nations' accessibility needs are accommodated so they may be engaged in meetings and events.
- G. Therefore, there is a need to promote, educate and provide accessibility options in First Nations and at all AFN meetings and other relevant meetings so they may participate and not be excluded from events pertaining to their lives or their communities.

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

1. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to take immediate and serious measures to ensure that all of their meetings and events include accessibility accommodations that meet the unique needs of all First Nations' participants.
2. Direct the AFN to develop an accessibility strategy that helps ensure accessibility accommodations are implemented, including a monitoring and an annual progress report;

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ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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3. Direct the AFN to lobby the Federal Government to provide resources to carry out the objectives outlined within this resolution, and report back to the Chiefs in Assembly at the December 2018 Special Chiefs Assembly.

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PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF

38 – 2018
Page 3 of 3