
Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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**Special Chiefs Assembly
December 7, 8, 9, 2021, Ottawa (Ontario)**

Resolution no. 16/2021

TITLE: Support for the United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages
(2022-32)

SUBJECT: Languages

MOVED BY: Ogimaa Duke Peltier, Wiikwemkoong, ON

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

DECISION Carried by consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:
- i. Article 13 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
 - ii. Article 14 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
 - iii. Article 16 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination.
- B. Through Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Resolution 01/2015, *Support for the Full Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action*, the Chiefs-in-Assembly fully supported the Report's 94 Calls to Action including specific Calls (13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 84, and 85) about Indigenous Peoples' languages.

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- C. AFN Resolution 46/2018, *United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages*, was adopted on December 4, 2018 and, among other things, it called upon the federal government to propose, advocate, and support a timely United Nations declaration of an International Decade of Indigenous Languages.
- D. The United Nations declared 2019 to be the International Year of Indigenous Languages and subsequently declared 2022 to 2032 to be the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL).
- E. The *Los Pinos Declaration* (Chapultepek) – *Making a Decade of Action for Indigenous Languages*, which resulted from the closing event of the International Year of Indigenous Languages, took place in Mexico City in February 2020. It highlighted the importance of enabling the use of Indigenous languages in justice systems, the media, labour, and health programming and set out a vision for planning and organizing the IDIL.
- F. The United Nations is urging participating States, including Canada, to support the development of a Global Action Plan and to develop National Action Plans for the IDIL.
- G. The Department of Canadian Heritage plans to develop a National Action Plan for the IDIL with Indigenous Peoples.
- H. First Nations voices and visions for the revitalization of First Nations languages must be included and recognizable in any planning regarding the IDIL, both within Turtle Island and internationally.
- I. Based on AFN Resolution 06/2015, *Revitalization of Indigenous Languages: Concrete Actions to Support Indigenous Languages Teachers and Cultural Centres*, the AFN is developing a Draft First Nations Language Revitalization Strategy for the revitalization of First Nations languages, which may be used to support future discussions regarding long-term planning for the revitalization of First Nations languages.

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

- 1. Acknowledge the *Los Pinos Declaration* (Chapultepek) – *Making a Decade of Action for Indigenous Languages* and adopt it as a guide for the Assembly of First Nations (AFN)'s participation in the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-32).
- 2. Direct the Chiefs Committee on Languages, the Technical Committee on Languages and the AFN to broadly support activities of the IDIL for the benefit of First Nations languages.

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3. Call on the Government of Canada, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and Global Affairs Canada or other involved federal departments, to engage directly and meaningfully with First Nations about planning and implementing Canada's participation in the IDIL.
4. Call on the Government of Canada to provide sufficient funding for the revitalization of Indigenous culture and languages at the community level.

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