
Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 3 – 5, 2019, OTTAWA, ON

Resolution no. 112/2019

TITLE:	Urgent Action by Heritage Canada to Implement TRC Call to Action #81
SUBJECT:	Indian Residential Schools National Monument
MOVED BY:	Chief Craig Makinaw, Ermineskin First Nation, AB
SECONDED BY:	Chief Charles Football, Wekwee'ti Council (Dechi Laot'l Council), NT
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

- A.** The *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) states:
- i. Article 7 (2): Indigenous Peoples have the collective right to live in freedom, peace and security as distinct peoples and shall not be subjected to any act of genocide or any other act of violence, including forcibly removing children of the group to another group.
 - ii. Article 8 (1): Indigenous Peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture.
- B.** For more than a century, Canada removed Indigenous children from their families and cultures under the Indian Residential Schools policy, with a stated intention of assimilation.
- C.** The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) participated in a significant class action court case, seeking reparations for harm caused by Indians Residential Schools (IRS), leading to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) and the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).
- D.** AFN Resolution 01/2015, *Support for the Full Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action* calls upon the Federal, Provincial, Territorial and Municipal Governments to take immediate steps to fully implement all of the Calls to Action contained within the summary of the Final Report of the TRC, released on June 2, 2015.

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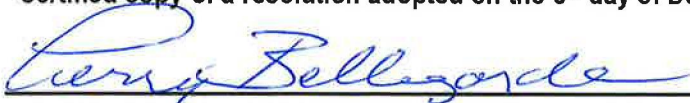
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- E. TRC Call to Action #81 calls upon Canada “to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools National Monument in the city of Ottawa to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities”.
- F. AFN Resolution 66/2010, *Commemorative Markers (Monuments) for all Indian Residential Schools in which First Nations Children were Placed*, directs the AFN to seek financial support for IRS monuments.
- G. Heritage Canada recently hosted a workshop with IRS survivors, inter-generational survivors, former TRC Commissioners and TRC Honorary Witnesses, who together affirmed their vision for a national monument and the importance that it be considered a world class sacred site of remembrance, spiritual healing, ongoing education, and international inspiration.
- H. Survivors acknowledge the rapid loss of fellow Survivors since the TRC Calls to Action were issued five years ago, and the desire to have Heritage Canada expedite its normal processes so that a Residential Schools National Monument be erected urgently, “so that we might actually get to see it.”

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

1. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to urge the federal government to allocate all necessary resources to ensure a world-class monument of a scale and impact adequate to reflecting the duration and severity of harms caused to seven generations of Indigenous children on Canadian soil because of government’s own policies and to further urge the federal government to consider additional, creative funding initiatives, as may be necessary, to ensure the realization of a monument of magnitude and impact to inspire the country and the world.
2. Direct the AFN to request the federal government prioritize efforts towards the early commissioning and installation of a world class, highly prominent National Monument for Residential Schools, in fulfillment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Call to Action #81 “to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities” and to honour the memory of thousands of children who died at Canadian Residential Schools including the “unknown children” whose remains may never be found, and to commemorate the resiliency of thousands of others, the Survivors, who fought for their lived experiences to be known.

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3. Direct the AFN to urge the federal government to encourage the consultative process now underway through the Department of Canadian Heritage, to ensure Survivors, intergenerational Survivors and their families' involvement in the steps leading to the selection of a monument project including its creative development, implementation and formal consecration as a sacred site, in keeping with the TRC's stated Principles of Reconciliation, now also endorsed and adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council.

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