ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
July 15, 16, & 17, 2008, Quebec City, QC

Resolution no. 08/2008

SUBJECT:	Emergency Resolution on Post-Secondary Education
MOVED BY:	Chief Gilbert Whiteduck, Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg, QC
SECONDED BY:	Toby Joseph, Proxy, Tsawout First Nation, BC
DECISION:	Carried by consensus.

WHEREAS:

A. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has refused to recognize First Nations post-secondary education as a Treaty and Inherent Right;

B. INAC continues to fail First Nation post-secondary students by offloading and abandoning their fiduciary responsibility to provincial governments;

C. INAC is openly considering the option of an independent third party organization such as the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, the Millennium Scholarship Foundation, or even INAC to take over the administration of the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and deliver it to individuals;

D. Discussions between AFN staff and INAC are at an impasse, with INAC officials stating that "First Nations education is beyond repair", that PSE will not receive any increase or changes to the program unless "First Nations account for every penny they receive", and that "the chances of increased funding to PSE are less than zero";

E. INAC claims, without evidence, that many First Nations are not accountable for PSSSP funding;

F. Two INAC audits by Pricewaterhouse Coopers and Hanson Macleod Institute demonstrated that First Nations are fully accountable and INAC's non-compliance with its *own* policies is an issue;

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G. Transferring program delivery to a third party organization would decrease the accountability of First Nations governments to students and would reduce the services and support to First Nations students now provided;

H. Article 14 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* states that, "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";

I. The Government of Canada formally apologized for the devastating impacts that its residential schools policy has had on First Nations people; and

J. The Sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development recommended to the federal government that quotes "the 2% annual cap on spending increases for INAC's Post-Secondary Education Program be eliminated immediately and that spending increases for PSE programming be based on actual costs associated with program components."

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. The Chiefs-in-Assembly mandate the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to make the federal, provincial and territorial governments in Canada aware of the consequences and ramifications of the federal government's attempted offloading to third parties of the federal fiduciary responsibilities for First Nations Post-Secondary Education.

2. The Chiefs-in-Assembly mandate the AFN to pursue corrections from the Minister of Indian Affairs concerning the damaging misinformation regarding First Nations governments' management of post-secondary education programs.

3. The Chiefs-in-Assembly mandate the AFN to engage with the Minister of Indian Affairs and First Nations governments to improve the PSSSP and the core funding of First Nations Institutes of Higher Learning by:
   - Increasing the funding to the First Nations PSSSP programs locally based on need;
   - Funding First Nations and the AFN to establish centralized data collection and performance management systems for post-secondary education to ensure the best value for money; and
   - Improve the accountability of INAC to First Nations regarding the PSSSP.

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