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

Resolution no. 31/2008

SUBJECT:	Support for First Nations Census
MOVED BY:	Chief Marcel Balfour, Norway House First Nation, MB
SECONDED BY:	Chief Daniel Pien, Conseil de la Nation du Lac Simon First Nation, QC
DECISION:	Carried by consensus.

WHEREAS:

A. Statistics Canada carries out a census of all Canadians every five years;

B. This census provides data which are used by governments, private sector business and industry, academics, and others across Canada for planning and developing policies and infrastructure;

C. Census population estimates are used to transfer payments from the federal government to the provinces and territories, and from provinces and territories to municipalities, and Statistics Canada states that "even a small error in the estimates could lead to misallocation of billions of dollars";

D. Census 2006 has undercounted the population of First Nations by many thousands across the country, and collected "complete data" from only 63.1% of reserves, with 22 First Nations refusing to participate, down from the 65.8% in the 2001 Census;

E. On January 15, 2008, Statistics Canada released "Aboriginal data" from the Census 2006, including First Nations on and off reserve population, and upon AFN questioning that day of the analysis of data, Statistics Canada re-released data which demonstrated the opposite fact which is that more First Nations people live on reserve than off;

F. Statistics Canada stated that it was "releasing the data in its most useable form, yet by presenting and Aboriginal role up of data, the reality of uniqueness of First Nations, Inuit, Métis lives is missing and is not useable by planners and decision makers utilizing these data;

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G. The results of Census 2006 excluded a number of First Nations communities who did not participate in 1996, and did include data from at least 168 First Nations that had data quality issues (had to be suppressed at the community level), with the result that Statistics Canada over-represented off reserve population and introduced potential bias to regional and national estimates, yet proceeded to present their analysis as accurate to the world; and

H. First Nations people have inherent and treaty rights to governance, and are responsible for the governance of their people, including the population census.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. The AFN request an independent review of the 2006 Census of First Nations, Inuit and Métis by an external qualified party.
2. The AFN and all Regional PTOs undertake a coordinated campaign to raise awareness among federal, provincial and territorial governments, private sector, academics, and non-profit organizations about the discrepancy in Statistics Canada collection and analysis of Census 2006 data regarding Aboriginal peoples, and encourage the use of a clearly drafted disclaimer if such data are used.
3. The Chiefs-in-Assembly support AFN's efforts to advocate for census resources so that First Nations conduct their own census according to First Nations inherent and treaty right to governance of our own people.

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