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## Assembly of First Nations

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## Assemblée des Premières Nations

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**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
JULY 11, 12, & 13, 2023; HALIFAX, NS**

**Resolution no. 51/2023**

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**TITLE:** Recognition of Canada's Indian Residential School Genocide and Reparations for Survivors and Descendants

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**SUBJECT:** Residential Schools

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**MOVED BY:** Chief Byron Louis, Okanagan Indian Band, BC

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**SECONDED BY:** Judy Wilson, proxy, Osoyoos Indian Band, BC

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**DECISION** Carried by Consensus

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**WHEREAS:**

- A. The United Nations Declaration on 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 violence, including forcibly removing children of the group to another group.
  - ii. Article 8 (2): States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for:
    - a. Any action which has the aim or effect of depriving them of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities;
    - b. Any form of forced population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of their rights;
    - c. Any form of forced assimilation or integration.
- B. The United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide states:

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- i. Article II: In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:
  - a. Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.
- C. From 1870 to 1996, approximately 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children in Canada were removed from their families and communities and forced to attend Residential Schools.
- D. Through Canada's Residential School System, many children experienced neglect, suffered emotional, physical and sexual abuse, or died while being forced to attend Residential Schools.
- E. On June 1, 2021, the House of Commons debated the "discovery of the remains of 215 children at a former Residential School in British Columbia." Prime Minister Justin Trudeau acknowledged that the country failed in its duty to the children, their families, and their communities.
- F. On the return flight from the Papal visit to Canada in July 2022, Pope Francis acknowledged that the Indian Residential School system was genocide.
- G. On October 27, 2022, through unanimous consent, the House of Commons of Canada, adopted the following motion:
  - H. That, in the opinion of the House, that the government must recognize what happened in Canada's Indian Residential Schools as genocide, as acknowledged by Pope Francis and in accordance with article II of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the First Nations-in-Assembly:**

1. Call on the Government of Canada to recognize that the establishment and operation of Indian Residential Schools was genocide as acknowledged by Pope Francis and in accordance with Article II of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
2. Call on the Government of Canada to commit to the following actions in the spirit of reconciliation and to begin healing after the recognition of genocide:
  - a. The continued healing of and support for the Survivors of Indian Residential Schools, their families, and communities through the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada;

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- b. Providing a guaranteed annual income for Survivors of the Indian Residential School system, their descendants, and descendants thereafter in perpetuity to support the revitalization of First Nations; and
- c. Educating all Canadians about the lessons from the Indian Residential Schools System genocide, its continuing impacts on society, and to bridge efforts of reconciliation between Indigenous Peoples and all Canadians.

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