SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 14, 15 & 16, 2010, GATINEAU, QC

Resolution no. 65/2010

TITLE:	Call for National Meeting – Future of the Boreal Forest and Rejection of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement
SUBJECT:	Forestry and Economic Development
MOVED BY:	Chief Ovide Mercredi, Misipawistik Cree Nation, Manitoba
SECONDED BY:	Grand Chief Stan Beardy, Proxy, Muskrat Dam First Nation, Ontario
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

A. For thousands of years, First Nations have been stewards of the boreal forest that sustains the cultures, environment, and economies of the hundreds of First Nation communities who call the boreal region home and this largely intact forest is now recognized as an area of global importance.

B. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes the rights of Indigenous Peoples to lands, territories and resources they own and traditionally own and Canada has endorsed these and other principles.

C. On May 14, 2010 nine Environmental Non-Government organizations (ENGOs) and 22 Canadian forest companies belonging to the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) announced the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, a three-year agreement to end conflict between them and to work towards improving sustainable forest management practices, advancing forest conservation, improving economic prosperity for forest dependent communities and increasing market recognition for participating companies.

D. First Nation governments were not included in the negotiations of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement and are not parties to the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement.

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E. The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement purports to acknowledge the Treaty and Aboriginal rights, title and aspirations of First Nations and further purports to recognize that what happens in the Boreal Forest within our traditional territories will be determined by government-to-government processes between First Nations and other governments.

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

1. Call on the National Chief to convene a national meeting of First Nations to discuss and develop policy on the future of the boreal forests within our traditional territories, including recognition of First Nation jurisdiction over traditional territories, climate change issues, the low-carbon economy, forest tenure, biodiversity and traditional uses.

2. Condemn the disrespectful manner in which the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement was negotiated by the Environmental Non-Government Organizations (ENGOs) and Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) and hereby reject and demand the termination of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement and declare that the Agreement shall be of no force and effect within the traditional territory or resource management area of any First Nation.

3. Call upon the National Chief to communicate to the parties of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement the rejection and demand for the termination of the Agreement by the AFN Chiefs in Assembly and that First Nations will exercise their Treaty and Aboriginal rights and title for the conservation, management and development of the boreal region and that any interests the parties may express in relation to the boreal forest are subject to the free, prior and informed consent of First Nations, to the terms of Treaties and Agreements, to First Nation resource management authorities and to government-to-government processes.

4. Direct the AFN Secretariat to collaborate with First Nations and First Nation management authorities to monitor any policy, planning or development initiatives in the Boreal forest and to assist in ensuring that any such initiatives are consistent with First Nation resource management and planning authorities and with government-to-government processes.

5. Direct the AFN Secretariat to complete its analysis of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement and to be tasked with collecting and making available all other First Nation reviews and analyses.

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