ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JULY 12, 13 & 14, 2011, MONCTON, NB

Resolution no. 33/2011

TITLE:	Fire Protection Services for First Nation Communities
SUBJECT:	Emergency Services / Infrastructure
MOVED BY:	Chief Don Maracle, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte, ON
SECONDED BY:	Chief Shining Turtle, Whitefish River First Nation, ON
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

A. Article 21 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) states: "Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvements of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retaining, housing, sanitation, health and social security."

B. Article 23 of the UNDRIP states: "Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions."

C. Article 39 of the UNDRIP states: "Indigenous peoples have the right to have access to financial and technical assistance from states and through international cooperation, for the enjoyment of the rights contained in this Declaration."

D. S. 36 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982, provides that Parliament and the legislatures, together with the Government of Canada and the Provincial governments are committed to:

   i. Promoting equal opportunities for the well-being of Canadians;

   ii. Furthering economic development to reduce disparity in opportunities; and

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iii. Providing essential public services of reasonable quality to all Canadians.

E. The 2007 document *Fire Prevention in Aboriginal Communities* developed by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation reports that "the First Nations per capita fire incidence rate is 2.4 times the per-capita rate for the rest of Canada. The death rate is 10.4 times greater; the fire injury rate is 2.5 times greater; and the fire damage per unit is 2.1 times greater."

F. First Nation persons living on-reserve do not enjoy the same levels of fire protection or prevention afforded to non-Indigenous communities of similar size and circumstances.

G. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) developed a First Nations Fire Protection Strategy in 2010 and identified gaps which hinder the provision of fire protection to First Nations.

H. The Chiefs-in-Assembly recognize the hard work and dedication of First Nation volunteer emergency services, fire chiefs and regional organizations in their efforts to prevent, mitigate and create awareness to reduce the fire losses in our communities in spite of the lack of adequate resources to address this situation.

I. The health, safety and economic well-being of First Nation citizens is of major concern and the devastation to First Nation communities caused by fire fatalities, fire injuries and incidents are intolerable and not acceptable.

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

1. Direct the AFN to call upon the Government of Canada to provide adequate financial resources to each region to conduct a comprehensive community risk assessment and impact analysis of First Nation Fire Protection and Prevention Services, including, but not limited to, fire-related assets, such as fire halls, fire trucks, and fire protection and prevention services to determine the financial, technical, human resource and policy development needs for each region.

2. Direct the AFN to call upon the Government of Canada to ensure that the determined levels of financial, technical, human resource and policy development needs for each region be based on recognized standards, regulations, and/or legislation.

3. Direct the AFN to call upon the Government of Canada to provide the required financial resources and support to those regional First Nation fire organizations and local emergency services that have completed comprehensive risk assessments to provide quality fire protection and prevention to their members comparable to non-Indigenous communities of similar size and circumstances.

4. Direct the AFN to support the activities of the duly mandated regional First Nation fire organizations, local emergency services in their efforts to create community level awareness on fire protection and prevention including community level assessments, with the creation of a Chief's Committee on Fire Protection that will report to the Annual General Assembly, any progress or issues that would require their intervention.

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