



SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
December 2-3-4, 2025, Ottawa, ON

Resolution no. 58/2025

TITLE: Affirmation of Indigenous Jurisdiction and Recognition of the Quatsino First Nation Declaration of Title and Relationship

SUBJECT: Rights, Governance, Nation-Building

MOVED BY: Marilyn Morash, Proxy, Quatsino First Nation, BC

SECONDED BY: Alkina Aleck, Proxy, Fountain Band (Xaxli'p Council), BC

DECISION: Carried by consensus

WHEREAS

- A. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) was formally endorsed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly through Resolution 37/2007, *Support and Endorsement of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which committed to its full implementation within First Nations laws, governance, and Nation-to-Nation agreements.
- B. First Nations-in-Assembly reaffirmed this commitment through Resolution 40/2021, *Recognition of Governance and Treaty Governance*, directing the Assembly of First Nations to support the development of a self-governed First Nations institution that would give force and effect to the provisions of the UN Declaration. The UN Declaration has since been affirmed by Canada and adopted into law in British Columbia and the Northwest Territories recognizing and affirming, amongst other rights, the Inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples to own, use, develop, and control their lands, territories, and resources.
- C. Quatsino First Nation upholds a sacred and ancestral relationship with its lands, waters, air, and all life within its territory—a relationship not based on ownership or dominion, but on person-to-person relationality as relatives, governed by principles of responsibility, care, and reciprocity.
- D. Quatsino First Nation has declared its inherent, pre-existing, and unceded jurisdiction through the Quatsino Declaration of Title and Relationship, which affirms that all elements of the natural world are living relations and that law flows from the obligations these relationships entail.
- E. Despite the commitments made by Canada and the provinces and territories, federal, provincial and territorial implementation has lacked operational clarity and has yet to embed First Nations' jurisdiction in a

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manner that reflects First Nations laws, spirituality, and systems of governance.

- F. Supporting First Nations' declarations such as Quatsino's is essential to future-proofing reconciliation efforts and grounding them in the spiritual, legal, and cultural foundations of Nations themselves.

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

1. Recognize and affirm, in principle, the Quatsino First Nation Declaration of Title and Relationship as a sacred and sovereign expression of inherent Indigenous governance and law, rooted in kinship and spiritual relationship with land, water, air, and resources, and acknowledge the importance of self-determination in defining such relationships.
2. Call upon the federal, provincial and territorial governments to co-develop, with the full participation and leadership of First Nations' rights holders, operational frameworks under the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and relevant legislation, that recognize and give effect to First Nations laws, authorities, and jurisdiction as foundational to shared governance and legal pluralism.
3. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to seek funding to initiate, within one year, a national First Nations-led roundtable series on spiritually grounded governance systems, and to establish a working group to support the development and implementation of title declarations and their legal application across Nations.
4. Encourage all First Nations to continue advancing and affirming their own declarations of title and relationship, grounded in their distinct legal orders and governance systems, as expressions of Nationhood and care for future generations.
5. Acknowledge that many First Nations are already advancing declarations of title and relationship grounded in their distinct legal systems and sacred responsibilities to land.
6. Direct the AFN to advocate for the full legal recognition, enforceability, and resourcing of First Nations' jurisdiction.

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