BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

National Indian Brotherhood

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Terms of Reference

AFN Women's Council

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS BACKGROUND INFORMATION

COMPOSITION

ARTICLE 23.A

1. The Council of Women shall consist of one or more female(s) in a leadership position representing each of the ten regions according to the following formulas: one each from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territory. Each region will be responsible for identifying the process for the appointment of their regional representative. In addition the Chairperson (or designate) shall be associated with the Secretariat and be a member of the Executive Committee.

ROLE AND FUNCTION

ARTICLE 24.A

1. The Council of Women may discuss any question or any matter within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter, and make recommendations to the Executive Committee, the Confederacy of Nations, the First Nations-in-Assembly or to any subsidiary organ on any such question or matter.
2. Any member of the Council of Women may participate fully in meetings of the First Nations-in-Assembly or of the Confederacy of Nations or of any subsidiary organ. The Chairperson (or designate) of the Council of Women may participate in meetings of the Executive Committee.
3. The Council of Women will determine and elaborate further on quorum, procedures, functions, etc. at the inaugural meeting of the Council.

AFN Women's Council holds inaugural meeting

The AFN Women's Council held its first official meeting during the Annual General Assembly in Charlottetown to discuss its role within the organization and develop a work plan.

National Chief Phil Fontaine announced the reestablishment of the Women's Council at the spring Confederacy of Nations meeting as part of the AFN's ongoing efforts to ensure the voice of women is heard in every activity and approach of the AFN.

The Women's Council will play an active role in advocacy, education and communication.

"In order for us to be successful we need to raise the profile of First Nations issues, and that is what the women's council is here to do on behalf of all the women in the country," said Chief Maureen Chapman of the Skawahlook First Nation and chair of the AFN Women's Council.

"This has been an issue near and dear to my heart all of my life. I want to acknowledge our National Chief for his support in initiating this process in 2000 and then reviving it here. It's historic. It's very encouraging that we have received the support that we have from our male leaders," she said.

The 10-member Council has a seat on the AFN Executive Committee and will develop a portfolio system on the various issues. During its meeting, the Women's Council identified several priorities including health, education, housing, and economic development that will be addressed in its work plan.

The Council will also assist in the development and promotion of the AFN Women's Issues Analysis Framework which is an analytical tool to ensure the perspective and interests of First Nations women are considered in all AFN positions and policies.

"Communication is very important. I think most people want to involve as many women as possible in passing on information and making sure there is involvement. We're all very interested in participating and we're looking forward to the next stop," said Elizabeth Asp, representative from Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council.