



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### First Nations leaders gather online for AFN's Special Chiefs Assembly this week

**(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George, BC)** – As this very difficult year nears its end First Nations leaders, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Women, and Youth representing many First Nations communities across British Columbia met online over three days this week for the Assembly of First Nations (AFN)'s Special Chiefs Assembly to work on **building our future** by tackling urgent and special issues and bringing forward concerns to Canada's political leaders.

Guests who attended the virtual Chiefs-in-Assembly included, The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, The Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, The Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, The Honourable David Lametti, Minister of Justice, The Honourable Erin O'Toole, Leader of the Opposition Party, Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party, and Yves François Blanchet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois.

Additional highlights for the event included the adoption of resolutions to add two-spirit to AFN governance structure and support for the UN International Decade (2022-32) of Indigenous Languages. Most resolutions were adopted by way of omnibus groupings in education, health, infrastructure, justice, land, rights, environment, and economic development.

"I look forward to working with the other Regional Chiefs, National Chief RoseAnne Archibald and First Nations Chiefs and leaders as we move forward to strategically strengthen the AFN organization into an innovative and vibrant organization. We must ensure our growing communities are supported and adequately resourced in social, environmental, economic, political and cultural sectors," stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee. "In B.C. one of our urgent priorities is to rebuild and strengthen First Nations communities that have been devastated by this year's unprecedented wildfires and floods. Future infrastructure planning and projects must consider inevitable extreme weather events as climate change continues to run its course."

Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, and its waves of variants, the AFN Special Chiefs Assembly 2021 was held online. Even though vaccinations are ongoing the meeting was hosted virtually to ensure the safety and well-being of the Leaders and First Nations communities across Canada.

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) advocates on behalf of First Nations on issues such as treaties, Indigenous rights, and land and resources with authority to review and enforce decisions and directions brought forward through resolution.

Go to the following link to view the Assembly event information: <https://www.afn.ca/special-chiefs-assembly-2021/>

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