



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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**BCAFN 5th REGIONAL CHIEFS' ASSEMBLY
FEBRUARY 24, 2009 NANAIMO, BC**

Resolution 6/2009

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR BC FIRST NATIONS WOMEN LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP

MOVED BY: Chief Lisa Shaver, Penelakut Indian Band

SECONDED BY: Chief Maureen Chapman, Skawahlook First Nation

DECISION: Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

- A. First Nations women are, and historically have been, integral to the success, livelihood and survival of our communities, and it is important for our leaders and our communities to acknowledge, honour, and support First Nations women and their leadership roles.
- B. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) has a Women's Council, and the BC Assembly of First Nations has an elected BC women's council representative to ensure that BC women's perspectives are brought forward in policy directives and activities and to effectively advocate on behalf of First Nations women.
- C. First Nations Women Chiefs, Councillors, and leaders gathered at a historic three-day meeting hosted by the National AFN in Vancouver and adopted the following eleven point consensus statement (February 2007):
 1. First Nations Women Chiefs, Councillors, and leaders honor the spirit and intent of the original relationship between First Nations and the British Crown to live in peaceful co-existence, without interference, and to uphold the unceded Inherent authorities given to us by the Creator.
 2. First Nations in Canada are Nations with pre-existing collective rights, responsibilities, languages, cultures, territories and laws.
 3. We maintain our authority to be the law-makers and caretakers of our Nations, our families and our land. First Nation holistic laws will continue to guide our decision

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Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, BC Regional Chief

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making in the face of any and all federal, provincial and territorial legislation. The Crown continues to breach this original compact and interfere with this Inherent jurisdiction, thereby creating and perpetuating poverty conditions amongst our peoples.

4. Our collective Inherent and Treaty rights must not be diminished or adversely impacted in the development of federal, provincial and territorial law and policy.
5. The First Nations Women Chiefs, Councillors, and leaders will stand with First Nations governments to advance a comprehensive plan for accountability of all governments, the protection of collective rights and to eradicate poverty and social injustice.
6. First Nations Women Chiefs, Councillors, and leaders will ensure that our lands, families and children are cared for; ensure that our rights are respected and upheld; and we will be responsible for the decisions that affect our lives. We will not relinquish our rights at the expense of our lands, families and future.
7. Negotiations and consultations regarding any federal, provincial or territorial initiatives that impact pre-existing Inherent First Nation jurisdictions and Treaty rights must take place with leadership of First Nations governments.
8. Solutions can be achieved locally, regionally, and nationally by working collectively. First Nations Women Chiefs, Councillors, and leaders call upon the Government of Canada to work together with First Nations to co-create a new future for all our people.
9. The cycle of poverty, violence, lack of access to quality health care and education, and the non-recognition of Inherent First Nations jurisdiction continue to be perpetuated in federal genocide and assimilationist policies and approaches.
10. First Nation Women Chiefs, Councillors, and leaders are united to oppose attempts by the federal government to unilaterally impose legislation and policy such as its initiatives currently reflected in the matrimonial real property process, and the repeal of section 67 of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. These federal initiatives that diminish or adversely impact upon our unceded Inherent authorities will be rejected.
11. We will accomplish this through collective action that supports systemic change. We will stand with the leadership of First Nation governments to advance a comprehensive plan for accountability of all governments; the protection of collective rights; and to eradicate poverty and social injustice in our communities.

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The BC Assembly of First Nations Chiefs in Assembly support BC First Nations women's leadership, in meaningful actions, in their pursuit to rebuild strong and healthy communities and families and to restore dignity and well-being to our people.
2. The BC Assembly of First Nations Chiefs in Assembly support BC First Nations women leaders and leadership in seeking the necessary resources and in developing capacity to further coordinate and facilitate open dialogue amongst BC First Nations women leadership to ensure an organized strategy in their collective work, including meaningful involvement of BC First Nations women leaders, at all levels, in the decision-making for our communities.

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