



BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

1004 Landooz Road
Prince George, BC V2K 5S3
Website: www.bcafn.ca

BCAFN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
September 21, 22, & 23, 2022
Hybrid - In person & online via Zoom

Resolution 25/2022

SUBJECT: RESPECTING INDIGENOUS LAW & BUILDING CAPACITY FOR OUR NEXT GENERATION TO WALK IN TWO-WORLDS

Moved by: KUKPI7 DARREL DRANEY, SKEETCHESTN, STK'EMLÚPSEMC TE SECWÉPEMC

Seconded by: KUKPI7 ROSANNE CASIMIR, TK'EMLÚPS TE SECWEPEMC, STK'EMLÚPSEMC TE SECWÉPEMC

Decision: CARRIED

WHEREAS:

- A. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (“**UN Declaration**”) states:
- i. Article **14 (1)**: Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
 - ii. Article **14 (3)**: 3. States shall, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for Indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.
 - iii. Article **15 (1)**: Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.
 - iv. Article **15 (2)**: States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among Indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.
 - v. Article **18**: Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their

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- own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own Indigenous decision making institutions.
- vi. Article 19: States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.
- B. In November 2019 the Province of BC passed the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* ("**Declaration Act**") which establishes the UN Declaration as the Province's framework for reconciliation, as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- C. On March 30, 2022 the Province of BC released its Declaration Act Action Plan (2022-2027) pursuant to section 4 of the Declaration Act which states the following actions:
- i. Action 2.1: Establish a Secretariat to guide and assist government to meet its obligations to ensure legislation is consistent with the UN Declaration, and is developed in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples (Declaration Act Secretariat);
 - ii. Action 2.6: Co-develop strategic-level policies, programs and initiatives to advance collaborative stewardship of the environment, land and resources, that address cumulative effects and respects Indigenous Knowledge. This will be achieved through collaborative stewardship forums, guardians program, land use planning initiatives and other innovative and evolving partnerships that support integrated land and resource management;
 - iii. Action 3.1: Develop essential training in partnership with Indigenous organizations, and deliver to the BC public service, public institutions and corporations that aims to build foundational understanding and competence about the history and rights of Indigenous Peoples, treaty process, rights and title, the UN Declaration, the BC Declaration Act, the dynamics of proper respectful relations, Indigenous-specific racism, and meaningful reconciliation;
 - iv. Action 3.2: Establish an operational approach to set and achieve targets for equitable recruitment and retention of Indigenous Peoples across the public sector, including at senior levels;
 - v. Action 4.4: Identify, develop and implement mechanisms and approaches to enable boards of education to better support Indigenous students, including increasing and ensuring equitable access to education and safe environments; and
 - vi. Action 4.5: Co-develop a policy framework for Indigenous post-secondary education and skills training that includes: supporting post-secondary institutions to be more culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners and communities.
- D. Qwelminté Secwépemc ("**QS**") as a collective of six (6) Secwépemc Communities united through the QS to BC Government-to-Government ("**G2G**") Skú7pecen's Journey Letter of Commitment ("**SJ LoC**") and QS affirms that we are a part of, but not the entirety of, the Secwépemc Nation. QS, under the SJ LoC, uphold our role within our historic Divisions or Campfires of the Secwépemc Nation as represented by Secwépemc communities of Simpcwemc (comprised of Simpcw First Nation), Stk'emlúpsemc te Secwépemc (comprised of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc & Skeetchestn) and Pespésellkwe te Secwépemc (including Adams Lake Indian Band, Splatstin, Little Shuswap Lake Band).

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- E. QS and BC have jointly developed and approved a Joint Intentions Paper which serves to describe the proposed framework of the shared path of QS and BC based on the mutual goal to recognize and reconcile the respective jurisdictions, governance, laws, interests and responsibilities and recognizes the QS TeamSkú7pecen: Building Capacity & Resiliency Initiative.
- F. QS have developed and successfully implemented our #TeamSkú7pecen model which is founded and grounded in Indigenous / Secwépemc Law as well as Western knowledge systems. The program is a safe space for students to learn and practice the principle of 'Walking on Two-Legs' or 'Walking in Two-Worlds' while building skills, knowledge and wisdom from both the Western and Secwépemc / Indigenous worlds. The program has been successfully building the next generation of practitioners who can effectively walk in two-worlds on the work of reconciliation.
- G. QS developed and implemented its TeamSkú7pecen Knowledge Builders Program in response to the severe capacity constraints which exist within our communities and within the Province of BC. Many of our Indigenous communities and the Provincial government will see increasing constraints on the work of reconciliation as qualified staff and leadership are either absent, burning out, or retiring in the near future. If the important work of reconciliation and implementation of the Declaration Act is to continue, we must seriously and purposely tackle the issue of capacity building.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly support the development of capacity building and Knowledge Builder programs (including but not limited to Guardians programs) with Indigenous Peoples and groups in a manner consistent with the UN Declaration and through Government-to-Government relationships;
2. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the Government of BC to direct its Declaration Secretariat to work directly with the Qwelmínte Secwépemc secretariat (on behalf of the Skú7pecen's Journey Letter of Commitment six Secwépemc signatory communities) to scope the development of a 'Walking in Two-Worlds' knowledge builders framework grounded in respecting Indigenous Law and from the TeamSkú7pecen Knowledge Builders program in order to support the implementation of the Declaration Act and its Action Plan;
3. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the Government of BC to work in full collaboration with First Nations, specifically seeking out insight from those with active programs, to develop a framework for the Guardians Program in a manner that is consistent with the UN Declaration and fully supported by capacity building initiatives, such as the TeamSkú7pecen Knowledge Builders Program.
4. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the Government of BC to work in full collaboration with First Nations, specifically seeking out insight from those with active programs, to develop supporting mechanisms for these capacity building programs to become recognized and accredited through the Provincial education systems and institutions.
5. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the Government of BC to work with the First Nation Leadership Council to dedicate a section of the agenda, including a panel for Indigenous Youth and Capacity Building at the Nov 28-30, 2022 FN Leadership – BC Cabinet Gathering.

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6. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly support the Qwelmínte Secwépemc in sharing information and knowledge regarding the TeamSkú7pecen Knowledge Builders program with interested Indigenous groups and organizations.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Terry Teegee', is written over a horizontal line.

Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief