



## BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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**BCAFN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**October 28, 29 & 30, 2025**  
**Hybrid - In person & online via Zoom**

**Resolution 37/2025**

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**SUBJECT:**            **TRANSITION OF THE BC FIRST NATIONS CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO AN INDEPENDENT ENTITY**

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**MOVED BY:**        **CHIEF JERRY JACK, MOWACHAHT/MUCHALAHT FIRST NATION**

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**SECONDED BY:**    **KUKPI7 ROSANNE CASIMIR, TK'EMLUPS TE SECWEPEMC**

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**DECISION:**        **CARRIED**

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**WHEREAS:**

- A.     *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* states:  
Article 3: Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.  
Article 5: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.  
Article 20: 1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems or institutions, to be secure in the enjoyment of their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities.  
Article 21: 1. Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security;

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**Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of October 2025**

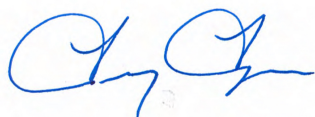
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**Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief**

- B. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution 31/2021, which directed the Regional Chief and BCAFN staff to work towards developing and implementing the concept for a BC First Nations Centre of Excellence for Economic Development (Centre of Excellence or COE) with explicit direction to ensure “a transparent process is developed and implemented in the creation and implementation of the COE”;
- C. the mandate of the Centre of Excellence was to establish a dedicated, First Nations-led institution to support the economic self-determination of First Nations, and this objective requires the Centre to operate with greater autonomy and independence to maximize its effectiveness and reach;
- D. From its inception in 2021, the Centre of Excellence was intended to become "a dedicated, First Nations-led institution to support the economic development of First Nations across all sectors" that would operate independently of BCAFN. Legal advice obtained by the BCAFN Board of Directors in January 2023 recommended that the Centre be transitioned from a program housed within BCAFN to a separate society incorporated under the *BC Societies Act*;
- E. the Centre of Excellence has successfully developed under BCAFN stewardship and demonstrated its capacity to support First Nations economic development across all sectors in British Columbia. Currently, the Center of Excellence consists of three [full-time] staff;
- F. an independent Centre of Excellence would have enhanced capacity to:
- Pursue diverse funding opportunities from federal, provincial, and private sector partners;
  - Establish its own governance structure as a society, with direct representation from First Nations across BC;
  - Develop specialized partnerships and collaborations without creating conflicts with BCAFN's advocacy mandate;
  - Scale its operations to meet the growing economic development needs of First Nations;
- G. The Province of British Columbia formalized an independence requirement through a Transfer Agreement dated December 13, 2022, which committed up to \$3.097 million in funding to BCAFN to develop the Centre as "a non-profit economic development organization independent of the BCAFN, with unique governance and staff." The Transfer Agreement explicitly stipulated that BCAFN must "transition to a self-sustaining funding model by the Completion Date";
- H. the transition to an independent entity aligns with principles of First Nations self-determination and the development of distinct economic institutions as affirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Articles 3, 5, and 20;

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Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief

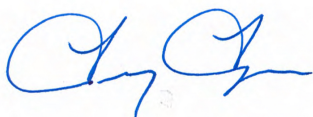
- I. on January 20, 2023, the BCAFN Board of Directors legal advice and met with Darren Haines, Ratcliff LLP, to discuss options for the COE transition to an independent society; and
- J. a planned and transparent transition process is necessary to ensure continuity of services, maintain relationships with First Nations rights holders, and preserve the institutional knowledge and partnerships developed under BCAFN's leadership;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Centre of Excellence staff working in collaboration with BCAFN staff and legal counsel and under the supervision of the BCAFN Board of Directors to:
  - a. complete the incorporation of a new society to house the Centre of Excellence before the BCAFN Special Chiefs Assembly scheduled for March 4 & 5, 2026;
  - b. develop and execute a comprehensive plan to complete the transition of the Centre of Excellence staff, funding and programs to the new society by March 31, 2026 or earlier, such plan to include timelines, governance structures, funding mechanisms, and operational frameworks;
- 2. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Centre of Excellence staff and BCAFN staff to ensure the transition process includes meaningful consultation with First Nations rights holders, and input from First Nations economic development experts and leaders across BC;
- 3. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Centre of Excellence staff to present the transition plan to the BCAFN Board of Directors by December 31, 2025 for review and approval before implementation, with a final report to be provided at the BCAFN Special Chiefs Assembly scheduled for March 4 & 5, 2026 at which time the transition must be substantially in progress and on track for completion no later than March 31, 2026; and
- 4. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly affirm their commitment to supporting the Centre of Excellence as an independent entity following the transition, including exploring opportunities for ongoing partnership, and collaboration on matters of mutual interest related to First Nations economic development in British Columbia.

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**Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief**