



BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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BCAFN SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
March 4 & 5, 2026
In person & online via Zoom

Resolution 11/2026

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR NATION-DIRECTED NEGOTIATIONS PATHWAYS AND UPHOLDING GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT COMMITMENTS UNDER DRIPA

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

DECISION: CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT (VOICE VOTE)

WHEREAS:

- A. First Nations in what is now known as British Columbia (BC) are sovereign Indigenous Nations and inherent, human, and Aboriginal title and rights holders whose laws, governance systems, and jurisdiction pre-exist Crown assertions of authority and continue today;
- B. the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) affirms Indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination, participation in decision-making through their own representative institutions, and consultation and cooperation in good faith to obtain free, prior, and informed consent;
- C. the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Declaration Act) establishes the UN Declaration as the framework for reconciliation in BC and requires the Province to take all measures necessary to ensure provincial laws and policies are consistent with the UN Declaration;
- D. the Declaration Act and related provincial reconciliation commitments contemplate collaborative governance, negotiated solutions, and government-to-government engagement with Indigenous Governing Bodies as central mechanisms for advancing

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reconciliation;

- E. recent decisions of the BC courts, including *Cowichan Tribes v British Columbia*, 2025 BCSC 1490, and *Gitxaala v British Columbia* (Chief Gold Commissioner), 2025 BCCA 430, reaffirm the significant legal consequences arising where Indigenous rights, title, and participation in decision-making processes are not meaningfully addressed through lawful and collaborative approaches;
- F. those decisions reinforce that negotiated, good faith government-to-government engagement remains the most stable and effective pathway for advancing reconciliation, certainty, and responsible stewardship outcomes for First Nations, the Province, and the public;
- G. First Nations across BC have invested significant governance capacity, resources, and community direction into negotiated reconciliation processes and collaborative stewardship arrangements developed in reliance upon provincial commitments to Declaration Act implementation;
- H. Qwelmínte Secwépemc (QS) is a collective of respective Secwépemc communities working through historic divisional governance structures and Campfires to advance coordinated government-to-government negotiations, collaborative stewardship, and reconciliation initiatives with the Province of BC through the Skú7pecen's Journey Letter of Commitment (SJ LoC) and related agreements;
- I. negotiated pathways developed through such government-to-government arrangements have required significant structural adjustments, governance coordination, staffing investments, and long-term community planning undertaken in good faith reliance upon continuity of engagement;
- J. recent provincial decisions affecting established reconciliation and negotiations frameworks have created uncertainty regarding continuity of engagement, funding stability, and cross-ministry coordination necessary to support informed governance decision-making by Indigenous Nations;
- K. Forestry consultation and revenue sharing agreements (FCRSA), including related forestry revenue-sharing mechanisms, are arrangements between First Nations and the Province of BC that provide direct economic benefits and a structured consultation process for forestry operations; and
- L. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly have consistently affirmed that reconciliation must proceed through honourable Crown conduct, transparency, and sustained good faith negotiations consistent with the UN Declaration and the Declaration Act.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly affirm their support for First Nations advancing coordinated, Nation-directed negotiations and collaborative stewardship governance approaches consistent with inherent jurisdiction, collective decision-making structures, and

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implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration);

2. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly affirm that negotiated government-to-government pathways grounded in Indigenous governance systems remain a preferred and responsible mechanism for advancing reconciliation, stewardship certainty, and shared decision-making across British Columbia (BC);
3. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call upon the Province of BC to uphold its legal obligations to implementing the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Declaration Act) by maintaining transparent, coordinated, and good faith engagement processes with Indigenous Governing Bodies and, where directed by rightsholders, regional collectives, including those operating through the Qwelminté Secwépemc Office Secretariat or other Nation-led coordination structures;
4. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call upon the Province of BC to maintain continuity of negotiated pathways and collaborative stewardship initiatives developed through existing government-to-government arrangements, including providing timely clarity, coordinated cross-ministry participation, and sufficient resourcing necessary to support informed First Nations leadership decision-making;
5. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call upon the Province of BC to uphold the honour of the Crown by ensuring that fiscal and administrative considerations do not undermine established reconciliation commitments, negotiated relationships, or the stability required for meaningful implementation of Declaration Act;
6. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief and BCAFN staff to advocate alongside affected First Nations and regional collectives to support negotiations processes that respect First Nations' governance structures and advance full and effective implementation of Declaration Act throughout BC; and
7. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call upon the Province of BC to ensure that forest consultation and revenue-sharing arrangements (related forestry revenue-sharing mechanisms) are not used as leverage or conditional pressure to compel First Nations to accept or sign administrative engagement frameworks or interim arrangements, and further call upon the Province of BC to maintain continuity and fairness in revenue-sharing while government-to-government negotiations are underway, consistent with the honour of the Crown, reconciliation objectives, and Declaration Act implementation.

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