BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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Prince George, BC V2K 5S3
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BCAFN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
October 14, 15 & 16, 2026
In person & online via Zoom

Resolution 21/2026

SUBJECT:	**SUPPORT IN PRINCIPLE FOR THE FIRST NATIONS - FIRST MINISTERS MEETING DRAFT "DECLARATION OF A SHARED PATH FORWARD"**
MOVED BY:	**CHIEF SHANA THOMAS, LYACKSON FIRST NATION**
SECONDED BY:	**CHIEF ED JOHN, TL'AZT'EN NATION**
DECISION:	**CARRIED**

WHEREAS:

A. First Ministers' Meetings (FMM) are historically convened by the Prime Minister and include the Premiers of the provinces and territories. FMM are meant to foster collaboration on matters of federal, provincial, and territorial importance. First Nations have historically been excluded from these meetings, despite discussion topics and decisions made at FMM often impacting First Nations' rights, title, and interests;

B. The Federal Government has committed to convening a First Nations-First Ministers Meeting (FN-FMM) in partnership with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) on unceded Anishinabe Algonquin territory in Ottawa, Ontario, on October 26, 2026;

C. the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), which the government of Canada has adopted without qualification and has, alongside the provincial government, passed legislation committing to implement, affirms:

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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 18: Indigenous Peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.
Article 23: Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programs affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programs through their own institutions;

D. per AFN Resolution 09/2026, "First Nations' Priorities for a First Nations–First Ministers' Meeting", the stated goal of the FN-FMM is "to secure commitment to a renewed process of addressing multi-jurisdictional issues with clear accountability and implementation mechanisms and timelines";

E. BCAFN hosted two BC Chiefs Caucus Meetings on August 31, 2026 and October 1, 2026 to provide space for the AFN to share updates, planning and logistics with Chiefs in BC, where it was recommended the BC Region develop a Unified Statement from BC Chiefs;

F. a regional representational formula has been developed by the Government of Canada which includes a total of eleven (11) First Nations delegates from BC, in addition to the Regional Chief, to attend as observers to the FN-FMM. On behalf of the AFN Executive Committee, Regional Chiefs have been tasked with selecting delegates for their regions;

G. the AFN has been working with the Privy Council Office (PCO) and Prime Minister's Office (PM0) in the development of a draft agenda which addresses items including inherent Rights, Treaty Rights, Jurisdiction, economic partnerships/participation, health and well-being, and discussion regarding "Building a resilient and prosperous Canada: A Shared Path Forward;" and

H. The AFN has developed a draft "Declaration on a Shared Path Forward," which articulates the commitment of the leadership present at the FN-FMM to ongoing dialogue and to advance the priorities identified at the FN-FMM.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly recognize and affirm that the role of the AFN for the First Nations-First Ministers Meeting (FN-FMM) is to:

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a. fully support First Nations Chiefs and leadership, including coordination and administrative duties, with no authority to negotiate for or discuss First Nations' inherent Title and Rights, Treaties, territories, jurisdiction, or Crown relationships independently of affected First Nations Chiefs and leadership; and

b. provide support for the coordination and administrative duties only, with no authority to negotiate or discuss First Nations Treaties, rights, lands, jurisdiction, or Crown relationships independently of rights holders;

2. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief to work in partnership with First Nations Chiefs and leadership to jointly develop and advance a unified position from the BC Region to Prime Minister Carney at the FN-FMM;

3. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief to advocate for meaningful and substantive participation of First Nations Chiefs and leadership in BC in the FN-FMM, including sufficient time and opportunity for Chiefs from the BC Region to address the Prime Minister;

4. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the Government of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations to ensure that:

    a. the FN-FMM establishes a renewed and enduring process for First Nations-Crown relations, reflective of Canada's commitments to implement the UN Declaration, with clear commitments, accountability measures, implementation mechanisms and timelines for addressing the priorities identified by First Nations; and
    b. Any commitments arising from the FN-FMM to be documented and followed through a transparent process for reporting to First Nations Chiefs and leadership on progress toward implementation;

5. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly assert that meaningful First Nations participation in FN-FMM and First Nations-Crown relations must be grounded in recognition and full implementation of First Nations' inherent, treaty and constitutionally protected rights and the minimum standards affirmed by the UN Declaration;

6. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly support, in principle, the proposed draft "Declaration of a Shared Path Forward," to be signed at the FN-FMM, which demonstrates the commitment to ongoing dialogue and to advance the priorities identified at the FN-FMM;

7. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on Prime Minister Carney to urgently convene a dedicated meeting with First Nations Chiefs and leadership in BC, separate from and in addition to the FN-FMM, to fulsomely discuss the priorities and issues related to First Nations-Crown relations; and

8. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief to work with First Nations Chiefs and leadership alongside the federal government to jointly develop an agenda with mutually agreed

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upon priorities and seek adequate funding for First Nations' full participation to prepare, plan and attend a dedicated BC First Nations - Prime Minister meeting.

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