BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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BCAFN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
October 14, 15 & 16, 2026
In person & online via Zoom

Resolution 31(c)/2026

SUBJECT: **INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS, MISSING AND DISAPPEARED CHILDREN, LONG-TERM FUNDING**

MOVED BY:

SECONDED BY:

DECISION:

WHEREAS:

A. the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), which Canada and British Columbia have committed to implement, affirms:

Article 22(2): States shall take measures, in conjunction with Indigenous Peoples, to ensure that Indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination;

Article 28(1): Indigenous Peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent;

Article 31(1): Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures;

Article 37(1): Indigenous Peoples have the right to the recognition, observance and enforcement of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements concluded

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with States or their successors and to have States honour and respect such treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements; and
Article 38: States, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, shall take the appropriate measures, including legislative measures, to achieve the ends of this Declaration;

B. the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, S.C. 2021, c.14 and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, SBC 2019, c.44 commit Canada and British Columbia to taking all measures necessary to ensure laws are consistent with the UN Declaration and to implementing action plans to achieve its objectives;

C. the Indian Residential School system resulted in the removal of Indigenous children from their families, communities, languages, cultures, and Nations, causing profound and intergenerational harms that continue to affect Indigenous Peoples throughout British Columbia and Canada;

D. the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada documented the deaths of thousands of Indigenous children who attended Indian Residential Schools and issued Calls to Action 71 through 76 respecting missing children and burial information;

E. the Government of Canada has committed to implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, including Calls to Action 71 through 76, and meaningful implementation of these Calls to Action requires sustained long-term investment in Indigenous-led investigations, records research, commemoration, repatriation, and healing initiatives;

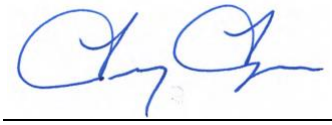
F. the Government of Canada established the Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Fund in 2021 to support Indigenous-led and Survivor-driven initiatives to identify, investigate, commemorate, memorialize, and honour children who never returned home from Indian Residential Schools;

G. First Nations throughout British Columbia continue to undertake investigations at former residential school sites and continue to identify records, burial locations, and information relating to missing and disappeared Indigenous children, demonstrating that this work remains active, ongoing, and requires sustained long-term support;

H. First Nations in British Columbia continue to identify new records, burial locations, and information concerning missing and disappeared Indigenous children, demonstrating that investigations remain active, ongoing, and unlikely to conclude within existing short-term funding frameworks;

I. the Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Fund supports a continuum of activities including archival research, records analysis, oral history collection, geophysical

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investigations, burial site documentation, commemoration initiatives, repatriation planning, and community healing work;

J. increasing numbers of Indigenous Nations are undertaking efforts to identify children, locate descendants and home communities, and explore culturally appropriate options for repatriation where requested by families and Nations, resulting in new responsibilities and long-term resource requirements;

K. uncertainty regarding continuation of federal funding beyond the 2026-2027 fiscal year creates significant barriers to staffing retention, records preservation, investigative continuity, family engagement, and implementation of long-term strategic initiatives; and

L. the investigation of missing and disappeared children continues to cause significant emotional, spiritual, cultural, and psychological impacts for Survivors, families, leadership, Knowledge Keepers, staff, and community members, requiring long-term culturally appropriate wellness, mental health, and healing supports;

M. the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites Associated with Indian Residential Schools identified the need for sustained support for Indigenous-led investigations, records analysis, burial site protection, implementation of Indigenous laws, commemoration efforts, and long-term truth-seeking processes, in accordance with UNDRIP Articles 18 and 31 respecting Indigenous decision-making authority and control over cultural heritage, historical records, and traditional knowledge; and

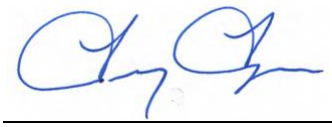
N. long-term federal funding commitments are necessary to ensure that First Nations are able to exercise their inherent rights and responsibilities respecting investigations, truth-seeking, repatriation, commemoration, healing, and accountability concerning children who never returned home;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly support the establishment of long-term, predictable, and sustainable federal funding commitments for Indigenous-led investigations, repatriation, commemoration, and healing initiatives relating to missing and disappeared Indigenous children;

2. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief to advocate that the Government of Canada publicly confirm continuation of funding for the Residential Schools Missing Children Community Support Fund beyond the 2026-2027 fiscal year;

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3. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly support direct and flexible funding arrangements that allow First Nations to determine their own investigative priorities, methodologies, timelines, cultural protocols, and community engagement processes;

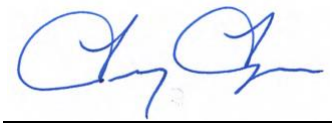
4. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly support multi-year funding agreements supporting investigations, records analysis, archival research, family tracing, repatriation initiatives, commemoration activities, cultural practices, language revitalization initiatives, and community healing programs;

5. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly support implementation of the funding-related obligations identified within the Independent Special Interlocutor's Final Report and Indigenous-led Reparations Framework for Missing and Disappeared Indigenous Children and Unmarked Burials;

6. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call upon Canada to establish a permanent funding framework supporting implementation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action 71 through 76 respecting missing children and burial information; and

7. the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief to advocate to the Government of Canada, with the First Nations Summit and the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, working together as the First Nations Leadership Council, the Assembly of First Nations, Survivors, and First Nations for a permanent federal funding framework that recognizes investigations concerning missing and disappeared Indigenous children as a long-term national responsibility and ensures First Nations have predictable and sustainable access to resources necessary to carry out investigations, repatriation, commemoration, healing, records management, and accountability initiatives.

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