

**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JULY 12, 13, & 14, 2016; NIAGARA FALLS, ON Resolution no. 60/2016**

TITLE: Recongnition of Indigenous Peoples as Founding Peoples of Canada

SUBJECT : Residential Schools

MOVED BY: Chief Wayne Christian, Splitsin Indian Band, BC

SECONDED BY: Chief Norman Hardisty Jr., Moose Cree First Nation, ON

DECISION : Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

1. Indigenous Peoples were the first Peoples to govern this land and were present for thousands of years prior to Confederation.
2. Indigenous Peoples were self-determining nations with distinct cultures, languages, laws, traditions and unique understanding of the land and environment.
3. Indigenous Peoples provided land, knowledge, military and other support to sustain colonial life, entered into Peace and Friendship Treaties and trade agreements with settlers to sustain economic growth and resource development on the land now recognized as Canada.
4. Indigenous Peoples were essential to the success of the fur trade that was the backbone of the economy for more than 250 years in the land now recognized as Canada.
5. The Indigenous nations negotiated treaties with the Crown transferring vast tracks of land that have produced immense riches making Canada one of the wealthiest nations in the world.
6. At Confederation in 1867, the languages of the British and French were constitutionally protected, as well as their civil rights, customs, traditions, laws and forms of governance, yet Indigenous Peoples' languages, civil rights, customs, traditions, laws and forms of governance were not protected.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 14th day of July 2016 in Niagara Falls, Ontario

PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF 60 – 2016

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JULY 12, 13, & 14, 2016; NIAGARA FALLS, ON Resolution no. 60/2016

7. **The Constitution of Canada states that English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada, while Indigenous languages have no such official status, equal rights or privileges as to their use.**
8. **The Government of Canada recognizes its relationship with Indigenous Peoples is fundamental and must be reconciled, based on a nation-to-nation relationship rooted in recognition of rights and mutual respect.**
9. **The nation-to nation relationship and reconciliation are concepts that must be given more explicit recognition and substance;**
10. **The Government of Canada has declared its full support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, recognizing that Indigenous Peoples are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals, and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination in the exercise of their rights, in particular those based on their Indigenous origin or identity;**
11. **This resolution makes explicit what courts, the Constitution, and political conferences have already implicitly recognized in acknowledging the important role Indigenous people play in federalism and in the fundamental definition of Canada;**
12. **In 2017 Canada will celebrate the 150th anniversary of Confederation, for which recognition of the Indigenous Peoples as founders of Canada is long overdue.**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Representing the First Nations of Canada, support and promote legislation in the Parliament of Canada for the

150th anniversary of Confederation that would direct the Government of Canada to:

1. **Consult and cooperate with Indigenous leadership to declare, recognize, and promote the understanding, within Canada and abroad, that the Indigenous Peoples are the original peoples of Canada and that the cultures, customs and languages of Indigenous Peoples comprise a fundamental characteristic of Canadian heritage and identity;**
2. **Foster the recognition and appreciation of the diverse Indigenous cultures, and promote and support the expressions of those cultures as valuable resources in the shaping of Canada's future;**
3. **Recognize and promote the full and equitable participation of Indigenous individuals and communities in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society according to their own values and priorities;**

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 14th day of July 2016 in Niagara Falls, Ontario

PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF 60 – 2016

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JULY 12, 13, & 14, 2016; NIAGARA FALLS, ON Resolution no. 60/2016

4. Recognize, declare and respect the inherent right of Indigenous self-government, including the authority of Indigenous governments to safeguard and develop their languages, cultures, economies, identities, institutions and traditions;
5. Recognize, declare and respect the inherent right of Indigenous peoples to develop, maintain and strengthen their relationship with their lands, waters and environment so as to determine and control their development as peoples according to their own values and priorities and to ensure the integrity of their societies;
6. Ensure that Indigenous People have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and advancement in those institutions;
7. Promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the understanding of and respect for Indigenous Peoples of Canada and their founding role;
8. Collect statistical data in order to enable the development of policies that are sensitive to and responsive to the Indigenous reality of Canada;
9. Make use, as appropriate, of the language skills and cultural understandings of Indigenous individuals and communities.

2. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to take such measures in consultation and cooperation with the First Nations of Canada to implement the Indigenous recognition policy of Canada and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing:

1. Encourage and assist individuals, organizations and institutions to project the Indigenous reality of Canada in their activities in Canada and abroad;
2. Encourage and promote exchanges and cooperation among the Indigenous communities and other communities of Canada;
3. Encourage and assist the business community, labour organizations, voluntary and other private organizations, as well as public institutions, to advance the full participation of Indigenous Peoples in Canadian society, including the social and economic aspects;
4. Facilitate funding for acquisition, retention, reclamation and use of Indigenous languages that contribute to the Indigenous reality of Canada;
5. Recognize and promote the implementation of the inherent right to Indigenous self-government within the Canadian federation, including but not limited to self - government with respect to ownership, use and management of lands, territories, and resources, and the development, maintenance and strengthening of their relationship with their lands, waters and environment, according to their own values and priorities.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 14th day of July 2016 in Niagara Falls, Ontario

PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF 60 – 2016

ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JULY 12, 13, & 14, 2016; NIAGARA FALLS, ON Resolution no. 60/2016

f. Consult and cooperate with Indigenous leadership to ensure that the laws of Canada protect and promote the full spectrum of Indigenous rights, including Aboriginal rights, Aboriginal title, and Treaty rights in a manner consistent with Section 35 of the Constitution Act, and recognize that the fundamental objective of Section 35 is to reconcile and inform the Crown's broader relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

- 3. Direct the AFN to establish an advisory committee to advise and assist the appropriate Ministers on the implementation of the Act and on any other matter relating to Indigenous recognition and report on the activities of the committee on a yearly basis concerning any other matter relating to the implementation of the Indigenous recognition policy of Canada that they consider appropriate.**
- 4. Direct the AFN to ensure that this work is reflective of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.**

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 14th day of July 2016 in Niagara Falls, Ontario

PERRY BELLEGARDE, NATIONAL CHIEF 60 – 2016