

Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
December 3, 4, 5, 2024, Ottawa, ON

Resolution no. 87/2024

TITLE: Ensuring Fair and Equitable Inclusion of the Northwest Territories in the Child Welfare Compensation and Long-Term Reform Final Settlement Agreement

SUBJECT: Children and Families

MOVED BY: Chief April Martel, K'atl'odeeche First Nation (Hay River Dene Reserve), NT

SECONDED BY: Chief Phillip Blake, Gwichya Gwich'in Dene First Nation, NT

DECISION Carried; 1 opposition; 10 abstentions

WHEREAS:

- A. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) affirms the following rights:
- i. Articles 2, 3, 4, 5, 7(2), 11(1), 13(1), 15(2), 18, 19, 22(2), 37(1) and 43 – affirm the rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination, including self-governance, in relation to children and their families, the right to free, prior and informed consent, and the right to be free from discrimination.
 - ii. Article 2: Indigenous peoples and individuals 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 that based on their indigenous origin or identity.
 - iii. Article 18: Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would 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.
- B. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Calls to Action #1 to #5 call on federal, provincial and territorial governments to take actions to improve First Nations child and family services.
- C. The Child Welfare Compensation and Long-Term Reform Final Settlement Agreements were established to provide financial compensation to those Indigenous children and families who were impacted by the child welfare system in Canada.

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- D.** The Northwest Territories has been disproportionately historically impacted by the child welfare system in Canada, resulting in the separation of many Indigenous children from their families and cultural roots.
- E.** The Northwest Territories has been excluded from the Child Welfare Compensation and Long-Term Reform Final Settlement Agreements, despite being impacted by this system.
- F.** It is the duty and obligation of the Assembly of First Nations to advocate for the rights and interests of all Indigenous Nations across Canada and ensure that they are all equitably included in any agreements, or nation to nation treaties, or settlements concerning their peoples.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the First Nations-in-Assembly:

- 1.** Call upon the Government of Canada to acknowledge and take action to address the historical impact of the child welfare system on Indigenous Children in the Northwest Territories.
- 2.** Direct the Assembly of First Nations to call upon the Government of Canada to fairly and equitably include the Dene Nation First Nations of the Northwest Territories in the Child Welfare Compensation and Long-Term Reform Final Settlement Agreements.

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